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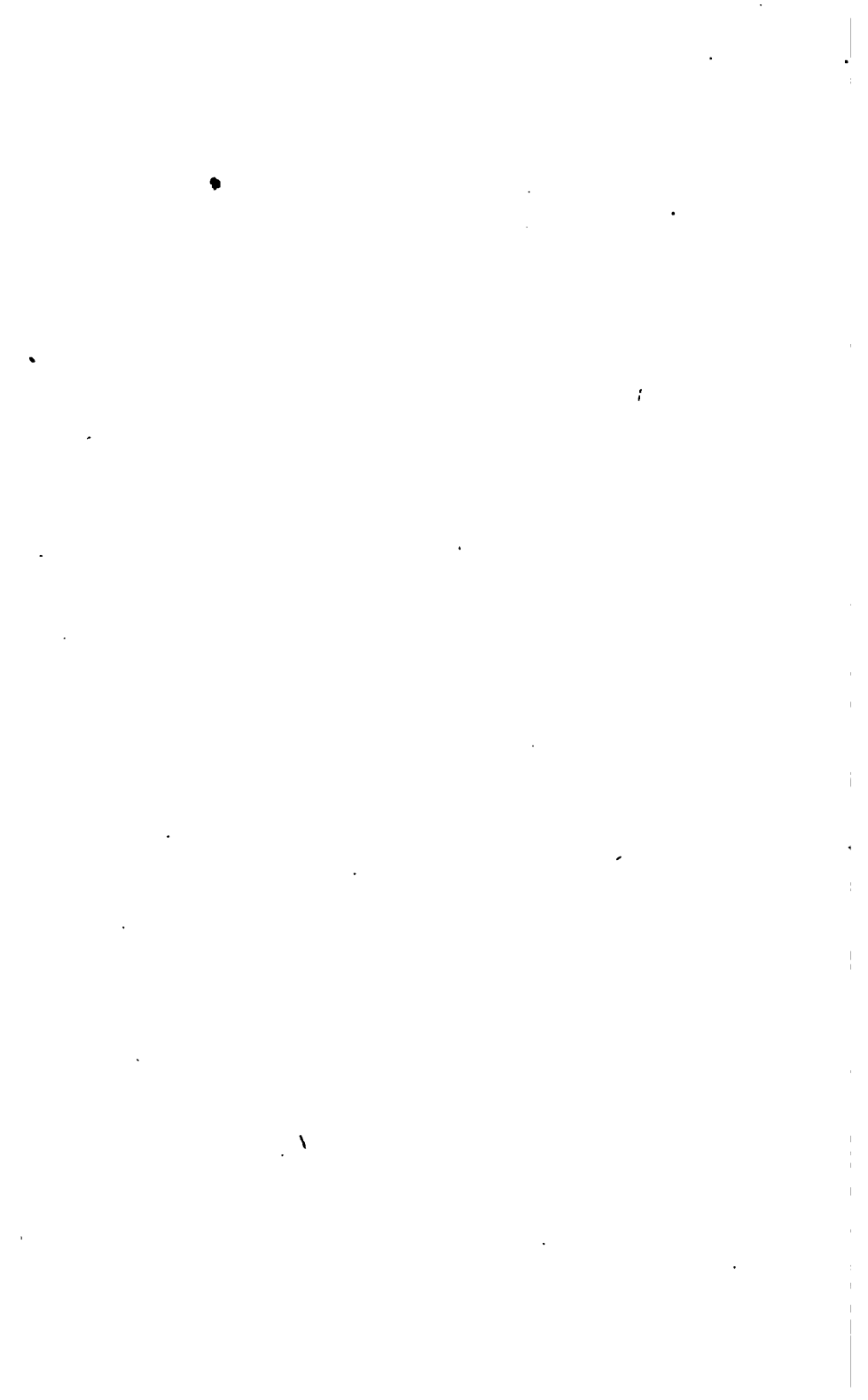


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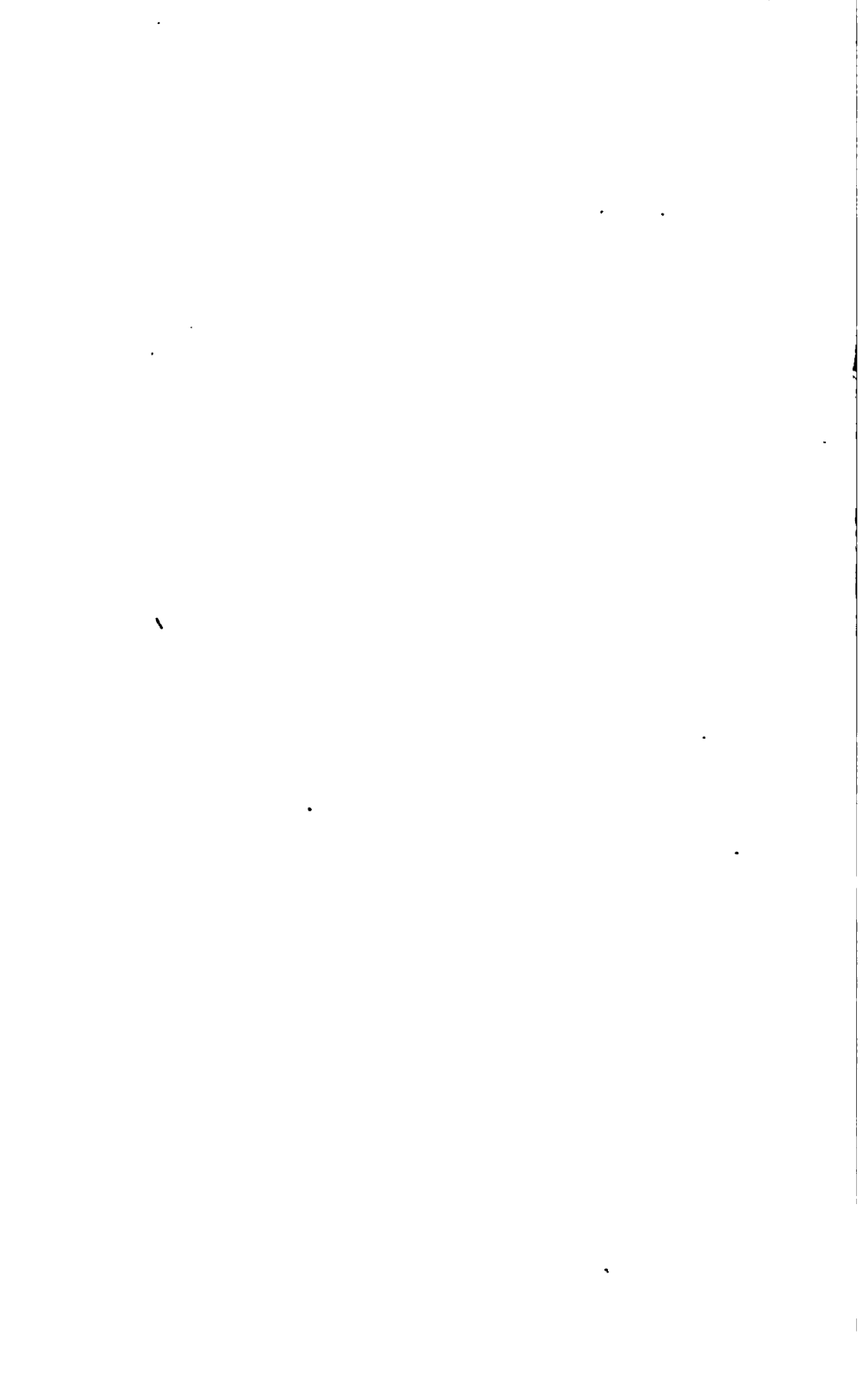
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THE MAID OF SKER.—CONCLUSION.

CHAPTER LXIII.—POLLY AT HOME.

LEST any one should be surprised that Sir Philip Bampfylde could have paid two visits to this delightful neighbourhood, without calling on our leading gentleman, and his own fellow-officer, Colonel Lougher—in which case the questions concerning Delushy would have been sifted long ago—I had better say at once what it was that stopped him. When the General thought it just worth while, though his hopes were faint about it, to inquire into the twisted story of the wreck on our coast, as given by the celebrated Felix Farley; the first authority he applied to was Coroner Bowles, who had held the inquest. Coroner Bowles told him all he knew (half of which was wrong, of course, by means of Hezekiah) and gave him a letter to Anthony Stew, as the most active and penetrating magistrate of the neighbourhood. Nothing could have been more unlucky. Not only did Stew baffle my desire to be more candid than the day itself, by his official browbeating, and the antip-

athy between us—not only did Stew, like an over-sharp fellow, trust one of the biggest rogues unhung—in his unregenerate dissenting days, and before we gave him six dozen, which certainly proved his salvation—I am sorry to say such things of my present good neighbour, 'Kiah; but here he is now, and subscribes to it) Hezekiah Perkins, whose view of the shipwreck, and learned disquisition on sand, misled the poor Coroner and all of the Jury, except myself, so blindly, that we drowned the five young men, and smothered the baby—not only did Stew, I say, get thus far in bewilderment of the subject, but he utterly ruined all chance of clearing it, by keeping Sir Philip from Candleston Court!

If you ask me how, I can only say, in common fairness to Anthony Stew (who is lately gone, poor fellow, to be cross-examined by somebody sharper even than himself—one to whom I would never afford material for unpleasant questions,

by speaking amiss of a man in his power—especially when so needless), in a word, to treat Stew as I hope myself to be treated by survivors, I admit that he may not have wished to keep Sir Philip away from the Colonel. But the former having once accepted Stew's keen hospitality, and tried to eat fish (which I might have bettered, had I known of his being there) felt, with his usual delicacy, that he ought not to visit a man at feud with the host whose salt—and very little else—he was then enjoying. For Mrs. Stew was more bitter of course than even her husband against Colonel Lougher, and roundly abused him the very first evening of Sir Philip's stay with them. So that the worthy General passed the gates of the excellent Colonel, half-a-dozen times perhaps, without once passing through them.

Enough about that; and I need only say, before returning to my own important and perhaps sagacious inquiries in Devonshire, that the news, so hastily blurted out by Captain Rodney Bluett, caused many glad hearts in our parish and neighbourhood; but nevertheless two sad ones. Of these one belonged to Roger Berkrolles, and the other to Moxy Thomas. The child had so won upon both these, not only by her misfortunes and the way in which she bore them, but by her loving disposition, bright manner, and docility, that it seemed very hard to lose her so, even though it were for her own good. Upon this latter point Master Berkrolles, when I came to see him, held an opinion, the folly of which surprised me, from a man of such reading and history. In real earnest he laid down that it might be a very bad thing for the maid, and make against her happiness, to come of a sudden into high position, importance, and even money. Such sentiments are to be found, I believe,

in the weaker parts of the Bible, such as are called the New Testament, which nobody can compare to the works of my ancestor, King David; and which, if you put aside Saint Paul, and Saint Peter (who cut the man's ear off, and rejected quite rightly the table-cloth), exhibit to my mind nobody of a patriotic spirit.

As for Moxy, she would not have been a woman if she had doubted about the value of high position, coin of the realm, and rich raiment. Nevertheless she cried bitterly that this child, as good as her own to her, and given her to make up for them, and now so clever to see to things, and to light the fire, and show her the way Lady Bluett put her dress on, should be taken away in a heap as it were, just as if the great folk had minded her. She blamed our poor Bunny for stealing the heart of young Watkin, who might have had the maid (according to his mother's fancy) with money enough to restock the farm, now things had proved so handsome. As if everybody did not know that Bardie would never think twice of Watkin; while his mother, hearing of the ships I had taken (as all over the parish reported), had put poor Watkin on bread and water, until he fell in love with Bunny! However, now she cried very severely, and in a great measure she meant it.

Leaving all Newton, and Nottage, and Sker, and even Bridgend to consider these matters, with a pleasing divergence of facts and conclusions, I find it my duty, however repugnant, to speak once more of my humble self. In adversity, my native dignity and the true grandeur of Cambria have always united, against my own feelings, to make me almost self-confident, or at any rate able to maintain my position, and knock under to nobody. But in prosperity, all this drops; extreme

affability, and my native longing to give pleasure, mark my deportment towards all the world ; and I almost never commit an assault.

In this fine and desirable frame of mind I arrived at Narnton Court once more, sooner perhaps than Captain Bluett, having so much further to go, burst in on his friends at Candleston ; although I have given his story precedence, not only on account of his higher rank, but because of the hurry he was in. On the other hand, my part seemed to be of a nice and delicate character—to find out all that I could without making any noise in the neighbourhood, to risk no chance, if it might be helped, of exciting Sir Philip Bampfylde, and, above all things, no possibility of arousing Chowne, till the proper time. For his craft was so great that he might destroy every link of evidence, if he once knew that we were in chase of him ; even as he could out-fox a fox.

When things of importance take their hinge, a good deal, upon feminine evidence, the first thing a wise man always does is to seek female instinct, if he sees his way to guide it. And to have the helm of a woman, nothing is so certain as a sort of a promise of marriage. A man need not go too very far, and must be awake about pen and ink, and witnesses, and so on ; but if he knows how to do it, and has lost an arm in battle, but preserved an unusually fine white beard, and has had another wife before, who was known to make too little of him, the fault is his own if he cannot manage half-a-dozen spinsters.

My reputation had outrun me—as it used to do, sometimes too often—for in the despatches my name came after scarcely more than fifty, though it should have been one of the foremost five ; however, my wound was handsomely chronicled,

and with a touch of my own description, such as is really heartfelt. Of course it was not quite cured yet, and I felt very shy about it ; and the very last thing I desired was for the women to come bothering. Tush ! I have no patience with them ; they make such a fuss of a trifle.

But being bound upon such an errand, and anxious to conciliate them so far as self-respect allowed, and knowing that if I denied myself to them, the movement would be much greater, I let them have peeps, and perceive at the same time that I really did want a new set of shirts. Half-a-dozen of damsels began at once to take my measure : and the result will last my lifetime.

But, amid all this glorification, whenever I thought of settling, there was one pretty face that I longed to see, and to my mind it beat the whole of them. What was become of my pretty Polly, the lover of my truthful tales, and did she still remember a brave, though not young, officer in the Navy, who had saved her from the jaws of death, by catching small-pox from her ? These questions were answered just in time, and in the right manner also, by the appearance of Polly herself, outblushing the rose at sight of me, and without a spot on her face, except from the very smart veil she was wearing. For she was no longer a servant now, but free and independent, and therefore entitled to take the veil, and she showed her high spirit by doing this, to the deep indignation of all our maid-servants. And still more indignant were these young women, when Polly demeaned herself, as they declared, with a perfectly shameless and brazen-faced manner of carrying on towards the noble old tar. They did not allow for the poor thing's gratitude to the only one who came nigh her in her despairing hour and saved her life thereby, nor yet for her sorrow and

tender feeling at the dire consequence to him; and it was not in their power, perhaps, to sympathise with the shock she felt at my maimed and war-beaten appearance. However, I carried the whole of it off in a bantering manner, as usual.

Still there was one resolution I came to, after long puzzling in what way to cope with the almost fatal difficulty of having to trust a woman. So I said to myself, that if this must be done, I might make it serve two purposes—first for discovery of what I sought, and then for a test of the value of a female, about whom I had serious feelings. These were in no way affected by some news I picked up from Nanette, or, as she now called herself, “The widow Heavyside.” Not that my old friend had left this world, but that he gave a wide berth to the part containing his beloved partner. She with a Frenchwoman’s wit and sagacity saw the advantage of remaining in the neighbourhood of her wrongs; and here with the pity now felt for her, and the help she received from Sir Philip himself, and her own skill in getting up women’s fal lals, she maintained her seven children cleverly. After shedding some natural tears for the admired but fugitive Heavyside, she came round, of course, to her neighbours’ affairs; and though she had not been at Narnton Court at the time when the children were stolen, she helped me no little by telling me where to find one who knew all that was known of it. This was a farmer’s wife now at Burrington (as I found out afterwards), a village some few leagues up the Tawe, and her name was Mrs. Shapland.

“From her my friend the Captain shall decouper the everything of this horrible affair,” said Nanette, who now spoke fine English. “She was the—what you call—the *bonne*, the guard of the leetle infants. I know

not where she leeves, some barbarous name. I do forget—but she have one cousin, a jolly girl, of the leetle name—pray how can you make such thing of ‘Mary?’”

“What, do you mean Polly?” I asked: “that is what we make of Mary. And what Polly is it then, Madame?”

“Yes, Paullee, the Paullee which have that horrible pest that makes holes in the faces. ‘Verole’ we call it. The Paullee that was in the great mansion, until she have the money left, the niece of the proud woman of manage. You shall with great facility find that Paullee.” Of course I could, for she had told me where I might call upon her, which I did that very same afternoon.

And a pretty and very snug cottage it was, just a furlong, or so, above the fine old village of Branton, with four or five beautiful meadows around it, and a bright pebbly brook at the turn of the lane. The cottage itself, even now in November, was hung all over with China roses, and honeysuckle in its second bloom, which it often shows in Devonshire. And up at the window, that shook off the thatch, and looked wide-awake as a dog’s house, a face, more bright than the roses, came, and went way, and came again, to put a good face upon being caught.

Hereupon I dismissed the boys, who, with several rounds of cheers, had escorted me through Branton; and with genuine thankfulness I gazed at the quiet and pleasing prospect. So charming now in the fall of the leaf, what would it be in the spring-time, with the meadows all breaking anew into green, and the trees all ready for their leaves again? Also these bright red Devonshire cows, all belonging to Polly, and even now streaming milkily—a firkin apiece was the least to expect of them, in the merry May month. A very deep feeling of real

peace, and the pleasure of small things fell on me; for a man of so many years, and one arm, might almost plead to himself some right to shed his experience over the earth, when his blood had been curdling on so many seas.

The very same thought was in Polly's eyes when she ran down and opened the door for me. The whole of this property was her own; or would be, at least, when her old grandmother would allow herself to be buried. That old woman now was ninety-five, if the parsons had minded the register; and a woman more fully resolved to live on I never had the luck to meet with. And the worst of it was, that her consent to Polly's marriage was needful, under the ancient cow-keeper's will, with all of the meadows so described, that nobody could get out of them. Hereupon, somehow, I managed to see that a very bold stroke was needed. And I took it, and won the old lady over, by downright defiance. I told her that she was a great deal too young to have any right to an opinion; and when she should come to my time of life, she would find me ready to hearken her. She said that no doubt it was bred from the wars for sailors to talk so bravely; but that I ought to know better—with a fie, and a sigh, and a fie again. To none of this would I give ear, but began to rebuke all the young generations, holding to ridicule those very points upon which they especially plume themselves, until this most excellent woman began to count all her cows on her fingers.

"Her can't have them. No, her shan't have they," she cried, with a power which proved that she saw them dropping into my jaws almost; "her han't a got 'em yet; and why should her have 'em?"

Into this very fine feeling and sense of possession I entered so ami-

ably, that amid much laughter and many blushes on the part of Polly (who pretended to treat the whole thing as a joke), the old lady put on her silver goggles, and set down her name to a memorandum prepared on the spur of the moment by me. Whereupon I quite made my mind up to go bravely in for it, and recompense Polly for all her faith, and gratitude, and frugality, if she should prove herself capable of keeping counsel also.

To this intent I expressed myself as elegantly as could be, having led Polly out to the wooden bridge, that nobody else might hear me. For that fine old woman became so deaf, all of a sudden, that I had no faith in any more of her organs, and desired to be at safe distance from her, as we'll as to learn something more of the cows. Nor did I miss the chance; for all of them having been milked by Polly, came up to know what I had to say to her, and their smell was beautiful. So I gave them a bit of salt out of my pocket, such as I always carry, and offered them some tobacco; and they put out their broad lips for the one, and snorted and sneezed at the other. When these valuable cows were gone to have a little more grazing, I just made Polly aware of the chance that appeared to be open before us. In short, I laid clearly before her the whole of my recent grand discovery, proving distinctly that with nothing more than a little proper management, I possessed therein at least an equivalent for her snug meadow homestead, and all the milch-cows and the trout-stream. Only she must not forget one thing, namely, that the whole of this value would vanish, if a single word of this story were breathed any further off than our own two selves, until the time was ripe for it. Of course I had not been quite such a fool as to give Nanette the smallest inkling

of any motive on my part beyond that pure curiosity, with which she could so well sympathise. Also it had been settled between Captain Bluett and myself, that a fortnight was to be allowed me for hunting up all the evidence, before he should cross the Channel; unless I took it on myself to fetch him.

Polly opened her blue eyes to such a size at all I told her, that I became quite uneasy lest she should open her mouth in proportion. For if my discovery once took wind before its entire completion, there would be at least fifty jealous fellows thrusting their oars into my own rowlocks, and robbing me of my own private enterprise. Also Miss Polly gave way to a feeling of anger and indignation, which certainly might be to some extent natural, but was, to say the least of it, in a far greater measure indiscreet, and even perilous.

"Oh the villain! oh the cruel villain!" she exclaimed, in a voice that quite alarmed me, considering how near the footpath was; "and a minister of the Gospel too! Oh the poor little babes, one adrift on the sea, and the other among them naked savages! What a mercy as they didn't eat him! And to blame the whole of it on a nice, harmless, kind-spoken, handsome gentleman, like our Captain! Oh, let me get hold of him!"

"That, my dear Polly, we never shall do, if you raise your voice in this way. Now come away from these trees with the ivy, and let us speak very quietly."

This dear creature did (as nearly as could be expected), what I told her; so that I really need not repent of my noble faith in the female race. This encouraged me; from its tendency to abolish prejudice, and to let the weaker vessels show that there is such a thing as a cork to them. Men are apt to judge too

much by experience on this subject; when they ought to know that experience never does apply to women, any more than reason does.

Nevertheless my Polly saw the way in and out of a lot of things, which to me were difficult. Especially as to the manner of handling her cousin, Mrs. Shapland, a very good woman in her way, but a ticklish one to deal with. And all the credit for all the truth we got out of Mrs. Shapland belongs not to me (any more than herself), but goes down in a lump to poor Polly.

To pass this lightly—as now behoves me—just let me tell what Susan Shapland said, when I worked it out of her. Any man can get the truth out of a woman, if he knows the way; I mean, of course, so far as she has been able to receive it. To expect more than this is unreasonable; and to get that much is wonderful. However, Polly and I, between us, did get a good deal of it.

Of course, we did not let this good woman even guess what we wanted with her; only we borrowed a farmer's cart from Bang, my old boy, who was now set up in a farm on his grandmother's ashes; and his horse was not to be found fault with, if a man did his duty in lashing him. This I was ready to understand, when pointed out by Polly; and he never hoisted his tail but what I raked him under his counter.

So after a long hill, commanding miles and miles of the course of the river, we fetched up in the courtyard of Farmer Shapland, and found his wife a brisk sharp woman, quite ready to tell her story. But what she did first, and for us, at this moment, was to rouse up the fire with a great dry fagot, crackling and sparkling merrily. For the mist of November was now beginning to crawl up the wavering valley, and the fading light from the west struck coldly on the winding river.

In such a case, and after a drive of many miles and much scenery, any man loves to see pots and pans goaded briskly to bubbling and sputtering, or even to help in the business himself, so far as the cook will put up with it. And then if a foolish good woman allows him (as pride sometimes induces her) to lift up a pot-lid when trembling with flavour, or give a shake to the frying-pan in the ecstasy of crackling, or even to blow on the iron spoon,

and then draw in his breath with a drop of it—what can he want with any scenery out of the window, or outside his waistcoat?

Such was my case, I declare to you, in that hospitable house with these good people of Burrington; nor could we fall to any other business, until this was done with; then after dark we drew round the fire, with a black-jack of grand old ale, and our pipes, to hear Mrs. Shapland's story.

CHAPTER LXIV.—SUSAN QUITE ACQUITS HERSELF.

It really does seem as wise a plan as any I am acquainted with, to let this good woman act according to the constitution of her sex,—that is to say, to say her say, and never be contradicted. We contradicted her once or twice, to reconcile her to herself; but all that came of it was to make her contradict perhaps herself, but certainly us, ten times as much. She did her best to explain her meaning; and we really ought to enter more into their disabilities. Therefore let her tell her story, as nearly in her own words, poor thing, as my sense of the English language can in any style agree with.

"I was nurse at Narnton Court, ever so many years ago—when my name was Susan Moggeridge,—Charley, you cannot deny it, you know; and all of us must be content to grow old, it is foolish to look at things otherwise. Twelve and six, that makes eighteen; now, Captain Wells, you know it do; and, Charley, can you say otherwise? Then it must have been eighteen years ago, when I was took on for under-nurse, because the Princess was expecting, the same as the butler told me. And it came to pass on a Sunday night, with two miles away from the doctor. Orders had been

given; but they foreigners always do belie them. Too soon always, or too late; and these two little dears was too soon, by reason of the wonderful child the eldest one was prepared for. A maid she was, and the other a boy; two real beauties both of them; as fair as could be, with little clear dots under their skin, in corner places, because of their mother the Princess. But nothing as any one would observe, except for a beauty to both of them. The boy was the biggest, though the girl came first; and first was her nature in everything, except, of course, in fatness, and by reason of always dancing. Not six months old was that child before she could dance on the kitchen table, with only one hand to hold her up, and a pleasure it was to look at her. And laugh with her little funny face, and nod her head, she would, as if she saw to the bottom of everything. And when she were scarce turned the twelvemonth, she could run, like—oh, just like anything, and roll over and over on the grass with her 'Pomyolianian dog,' as she called him, and there wasn't a word in the language as ever come amiss to her, but for the r's or the y's in it. Words such as I could lay no tongue to, she would take and pro-

nounce right off, and then laugh at herself and everybody. And the way she used to put her hands out, laying down the law to all of us—we didn't want a showman in the house so long as we had Miss Bertha, or 'Bardie,' as she called herself, though christened after her mother. Everybody, the poor little mite, she expected everybody to know her name and all about her; and nothing put her in such a passion as to pretend not to know who she was. 'I'se Bardie,' she used to cry out, with her little hands spread, and her bright eyes flashing; 'I'se Bardie, I tell 'a; and everybody knows it.' Oh yes, and she never could say 'th'—but 'niss' and 'nat,' for this and that. And how angry she used to be, to be sure, if anybody mocked her, as we used to do for the fun of it. But even there, she was up to us, for she began to talk French, for revenge upon us, having taken the trick from her mother.

"Likewise the boy was a different child altogether, in many ways. He scarcely could learn to speak at all, because he was a very fine child indeed, and quiet, and fat, and easy. He would lie by for hours on a velvet cushion, and watch his little sister having her perpetual round of play. Dolls, and horses, and Noah's arks, and all the things that were alive to her, and she talking to them whiles the hour,—he took no more notice than just to stroke them, and say, 'Boo, boo!' or 'Poor, poor!' which was nearly all that he could say. Not that he was to blame, of course, nor would any one having sense think of it, especially after he took the pink fever, and it struck to his head, and they cut his hair off. Beautiful curls as was ever seen, and some of them in my drawer up-stairs now, with the colour of gold streaking over them. Philip his name was, of course, from Sir Philip, and being the heir to

the title; but his clever sister she always called him 'little brother,' as if he was just born almost, when he weighed pretty nearly two of her.

"Sir Philip, the good old gentleman, was away in foreign parts, they said, or commanding some of the colonies, up to the time when these two twins were close upon two years old, or so. I remember quite well when he came home with his luggage marked 'General Bampfylde,' and we said it was disrespectful of the Government to call him so, when his true name was 'Sir Philip.' He had never seen his grandchildren till now, and what a fuss he made with them! But they had scarcely time to know him, before they were sadly murdered; or worse, perhaps, for all that any one knows to the contrary. Because Sir Philip's younger son, Captain Drake Bampfylde, came from the seas and America, just at this time. No one expected him, of course, from among such distant places; and he had not been home for three years at least, and how noble he did look, until we saw how his shirts were cobbled! And every one all about the place said that his little finger was worth the whole of the Squire's body. Because the Squire, his elder brother, and the heir of Sir Philip, was of a nature, not to say—but I cannot make it clear to you. No one could say a word against him; only he were not, what you may call it,—not as we Devonshire people are,—not with a smile and kind look of the eye, the same as Captain Drake was.

"This poor Captain Drake—poor or bad, I scarce know which to put it, after all I have heard of him—anyhow his mind was set upon a little chit of a thing, not more than fifteen at this time. Her name was Isabel Carey, and her father had

been a nobleman, and when he departed this life, he ordered her off to Narnton Court. So she did at an early age; and being so beautiful, as some thought, she was desperate with the Captain. They used to go walking all up in the woods, or down on the river in a boat, until it was too bad of them. The Captain, I daresay, meant no harm, and perhaps he did none; but still there are sure to be talkative people who want to give their opinions. If Charley had carried on so with me, whatever should I have thought of myself

"Well, there was everybody saying very fine things to everybody, gay doings likewise, and great feasts, and singing, and dancing, and all the rest. And the Captain hired a pleasure-boat, by name the 'Wild Duck of Appledore;' and I never shall forget the day when he took a whole pack of us for a sail out over Barnstaple bar and back. I was forced to go, because he needs must take the children; and several even old people were sick, but no one a quarter so bad as me. And it came into my mind in that state, that he was longing, as well as welcome, to cast us all into the raging sea. However, the Lord preserved us. This little ship had one mast, as they call it, and he kept her generally in a little bend just above the salmon-weir, so as to see the men draw the pool, and himself to shoot the wild-fowl, from a covered place there is; and by reason of being so long at sea, he could not sleep comfortable at the Court, but must needs make his bed in this pleasuring-ship, and to it he used to go to and fro in a little white boat as belonged to it.

"All this time the weather was so hot we could scarcely bear our clothes on, and were ready to envy them scandalous savages belonging to the famous Parson Chowne, who

went about with no clothes on. There was one of these known to be down on the burrows a-bathing of his wife and family, if a decent woman may name them so. Well, the whole of these gay goings on, to celebrate the return of Sir Philip, and of Captain Drake, and all that they owed to the Lord for His goodness, was to finish up with a great dinner to all the tenants on the property; and then on the children's birthday, a feasting of all the gentry around; and a dance with all sorts of outlandish dresses and masks on, in the evening. For the fashion of this was come down from London, and there had been a party of this sort over to Lord Basset's and the neighbourhood was wild with it. And after this everything was to be quiet, because my Lady the Princess Bertha was again beginning to expect almost.

"And now, Captain Wells, you would hardly believe what a blow there was sent, by the will of the Lord, upon all of this riot and revelry. There was many of us having pious disposals, as well as religious bringings up, whose stomachs really was turned by the worldliness as was around us. Young ladies of the very best families, instead of turning their minds to the Lord, turning of themselves about, with young men laying hold of them, as if there was nothing more to be said than 'Kiss me quick!' and, 'I'll do it again!' But there was a judgment coming. They might lay the blame on me, if they like. There is folk as knows better.

"That very night it was so hot with the sun coming up from the river, that even the great hall the dance was to be in, was only fit to lie down in. So that Captain Drake, in his man-of-war voice, shouted (and I think I can hear him now), 'Ladies and gentlemen, I propose that we have our dance out on the

terrace.' This was the open made-up flat between the house and the river, and the Captain's offer was caught up at, directly the gentlefolk seen the moon.

"Here they were going on ever so long; and the more of twirling round they had, and of making heel and toe, and crossing arms and even frontesses, the more they seemed to like it; also the music up and down almost as bad as they was; so that what with the harlequin dresses, and masquerading, and mummeries, scarcely any one could have the head to be sure of any one else almost. I could not help looking at them, although my place was to heed the children only, and keep them out of mischief, and take them to bed at the proper time. But Captain Drake, who was here, there, and elsewhere, making himself agreeable, up he comes to me with a bottle, and he says, 'Mary, have some.' 'My name is not Mary, but Susan, sir, and much at your service,' I answered; so that he poured me a great glassful, and said that it was Sam—something. I was not so rude as to give him denial, but made him a curtsy, and drank it, for it was not so strong as my father's cider; no, nor so good to my liking. And for any to say that it got in my head, shows a very spiteful woman. The Captain went on to the other maids, as were looking on for the life of them, all being out-of-doors you must mind, and longing to have their turn at it. But I held myself above them always, and went back to my children.

"These were in a little bower made up for the occasion, with boughs of trees, and twisted wood, and moss from the forest to lie upon. Master Philip was tired and heavy, and working his eyes with the backs of his hands, and yawning, and falling away almost. But

that little Bertha was as wide-awake as a lark on her nest in the morning. Everywhere she was looking about for somebody to encourage her to have 'more play,' as she always called for; and 'more play' continually. That child was so full of life, it was 'more play' all day long with her! And even now, in the fiery heat and thorough down thirst of the weather, nothing was further from her mind than to go to bed without a gambol for it. She had nothing on but her little shift, or under frock I should call it, made by myself, when the hot weather came, from a new jennyset of the Princess, and cut out by my lady to fit her for the sake of the coolness. Her grand white upper frock, trimmed with lace, had been taken off by her papa, I believe, when the visitors would have her dance on the table, and make speeches to them; the poor little soul was so quick and so hot.

"Well, I do declare to you, Captain Wells, and Charley, Polly likewise, which will believe me, though the men may not, it was not more than a minute or so much, perhaps I should say not half a minute, as I happened to turn round to pass a compliment with a young man as seemed struck with me the Sunday before in church-time; a sailor he were, and had come with the Captain, and was his mate of the pleasure-boat. A right down handsome young man he was—no call for you to be jealous, Charley. Beneath the salt waves he do lie. Well, I turned back my head in about five seconds, and both of the babes was gone out of my sight! At first I were not frightened much. I took it for one of Miss Bertha's tricks, to make off with her little brother. So strong she was on her legs, though light, that many a time she would lift him up by his middle and carry him half round the room, and then

both of them break out laughing. 'I'll whip you, you see if I don't,' I cried, as I ran round the corner to seek for them; though whip them I never did, poor dears, any more than their own mother did. I ran all about, for five minutes at least, around and among the branches stuck in to make the bower, and every moment I made up my mind for Miss Bardie to pop out on me. But pop out she never did, nor will, until the day of judgment.

"When I began to see something more than an innocent baby trick in it, and to think (I daresay) of these two babies' value, with all the land they were born to, the first thing I did was to call out 'Jack!' such being all sailors' names, of course. But Jack was gone out of all hearing; and most folk said it was Jack that took them! To the contrary I could swear; but who would listen to me when the lie went out that I was entirely tipsy?

"Of the rest I cannot speak clearly, because my heart flew right up into my brain, directly moment the people came round shouting at me for the children. And of these the very worst was Parson Chowne. If it had been his own only children—such as he says he is too good to have—he scarcely could have been more rampagious, not to use worse words of him. The first thing that every one ran to, of course, was the parapetch and the river, and a great cry was made for Captain Drake Bampfylde, from his knowledge of the waterways. But, though all the evening foremost in conducting everything, now there was no sign to be had of him, or of who had seen him last. And it must have been an hour ere ever he come, and then of course it was too late.

"I was so beside myself all that night that I cannot tell how the time went by. I remember looking

over the parapetch at a place where the water is always deep, and seeing the fishermen from the salmon-weir dragging their nets for the poor mites of bodies. And my blood seemed to curdle inside me almost, every time they came out with a stone or a log. Nothing was found from that night to this day, and nothing will ever be found of it. I was discharged, and a great many others; not the first time in this world, I believe, when the bottom of the whole was witchcraft. Here, Charley, put something hot in my glass; the evenings are getting so dark; and I never can see the moon and the water, like that, and the trees, without remembering. Now ask me no more, if you please, good people."

When Mrs. Shapland had finished this tale, and was taking some well-earned refreshment, Polly and I looked at one another, as much as to say, "That settles it." Nor did we press her with any more questions until her mind had recovered its tone by frying some slices of ham cut thin, and half-a-dozen new-laid eggs for us. Then, I approached her with no small praise, which she deserved, and appeared (so far as I could judge) to desire, perhaps; and with a little skill on my part, she was soon warmed up again, having tasted egg-flip, to be sure of it.

"Yes, Captain Wells, you can see through the whole of it. Sailors can understand a river, when nobody else knows anything. The Captain came forward as soon as he could, and he says, 'You fools, what are you about? An hour ago the tide was running five knots an hour where you be dragging! If the poor children fell over, they must be down river-bar by this time.' And off he set out on a galloping horse, to scurry the sand-hills somehow. And scurry was now the whole of

it. Sir Philip came forth, and that poor Squire Philip; and a thousand pounds was as freely talked of as if it was halfpence. And every one was to be put in prison; especially me, if you please, as blameless as the unborn babe was! And that very night the Princess were taken, and died the next day, upsetting everything, ever so much worse than ever. For poor Squire Philip fell into a trance, so to say, out of sheer vexation. He cried out that the hand of the Lord was upon him, and too heavy for him to bear—particular from his own brother. And after that not an inch would he budge to make inquiry or anything, but shut himself up in his dead wife's rooms, and there he have moped from that day to this, in a living grave, as you may call it."

In reply to my question what reasons the Squire, or any one else, might have for charging the Captain with so vile a deed, this excellent woman set them forth pretty much to the following purport. First, it was the Captain himself who proposed the dancing on the terrace. Second, it was his own man who drew her attention away from the children, after a goblet of wine had been administered by the master. Third, it was his own boat which was missing, and never heard of afterwards. Fourth, the Captain himself disappeared from the party at the very time that the children were stolen, and refused to say whither, or why, he was gone. That active and shrewd man Parson Chowne no sooner heard of the loss than he raised a cry for the Captain all over the terrace, to come and command the fishermen; and though as a friend of the family Chowne would never express an opinion, he could not undo that sad shake of the head which he gave when no Captain could be found. Fifth, a man with a Captain's hat was seen

burying two small bodies that night, in the depth of Braunton Wilderness; though nothing was heard of it till the next week, through the savageness of the witness; and by that time the fierce storm on the Sunday had changed the whole face of the burrows, so that to find the spot was impossible. Sixth, it was now recalled to mind that Drake Bampfylde had killed a poor schoolfellow in his young days, for which the Lord had most righteously sent a shark in pursuit of him. It was likely enough that he would go on killing children upon occasion. Seventh reason, and perhaps worth all the rest—only think what a motive he had for it. No one else could gain sixpence by it; Drake Bampfylde would gain everything—the succession to the title and estates, and the immediate right to aspire to the hand of the beautiful heiress, Miss Carey, who was known to favour him.

Thus the common people reasoned; but our Susan attached no weight to any except the last argument. As for one, she knew quite well that the young seaman sauntered there quite by chance, and quite by chance she spoke to him; and as for wine, she could take a quart of her father's cider, and feel it less than she could describe to any one; and as for a rummer of that stuff she had, it was quite below contempt to her. And concerning the Captain just being away, and declining to say where he was, like a gentleman; none but ignorant folk could pretend not to know what that meant. Of course he was gone, between the dances, for a little cool walk in the firwoods, together with his Isabel; and to expose her name to the public, with their nasty way of regarding things, was utterly out of the question to a real British officer! And to finish it, Mrs. Shapland said

that she was almost what you might call a young woman even now; at any rate with ten times the sense any of the young ones were up to. And ten years of her life she would give, if Charley would allow of her, to know what became of them two little dears, and to punish the villain that wronged them.

Hereupon my warmth of heart got the better of my prudence. My wise and pure intention was to get out of this good woman all I could; but impart to her nothing more

than was needful, just to keep her talking. Experience shows us that this need be very little indeed, if anything, in a female dialogue. But now I was brought to such a pitch of tenderness by this time, with my heart in a rapid pulse of descriptions, and the egg-flip going round sturdily, also Polly looking at me in a most beseeching way, that I could not keep my own counsel even, but was compelled to increase their comfort by declaring everything.

CHAPTER LXV.—SO DOES POOR OLD DAVY.

Hereupon, you may well suppose that the grass must no longer grow under my feet. With one man, and positively two women, in this very same county, having possession of my secret, how long could I hope to work this latter to any good purpose? Luckily Burrington lay at a very great distance from Nympton on the Moors, and with no road from one to the other; so that if Mr. and Mrs. Shapland should fail of keeping their promised tightness, at least two Barnstaple market-days must pass before Nympton heard anything. And but for this consideration, even their style of treatment would not have made me so confiding.

On the following morn, while looking forth at pigs, and calves, and cocks, and ducks, I perceived that the crash must come speedily, and resolved to be downright smart with it. So after making a brisk little breakfast, upon the two wings and two legs of a goose, grilled with a trifle of stuffing, there was but one question I asked before leaving many warm tears behind me.

“Good Mistress Shapland, would you know that jemmynet of the child, if you saw it?”

“Captain Wells, I am not quite a natural. My own stitching done with a club-head, all of it, and of a three-lined thread as my uncles, and nobody else had, to Barnstaple. Likewise the mark of the Princess done, a mannygram, as they call it.”

The weather was dull, and the time of year as stormy as any I know of: nevertheless it was quite fine now, and taking upon myself to risk five guineas out of my savings, Ilfracombe was the place I sought, and found it with some difficulty. Thus might Barnstaple bar be avoided, and all the tumbling of inshore waters; and thus with no more than a pilot-yawl did I cross that dangerous channel, at the most dangerous time of the year almost. Nothing less than my Royal clothes and manifest high rank in the Navy could have induced this fine old pilot to make sail for the opposite coast in the month of November, when violent gales are so common with us. But I showed him two alternatives, three golden guineas on the one hand, impressment on the other; for a press-gang was in the neighbourhood now, and I told him that I was its captain, and

that we laughed at all certificates. And not being sure that this man and his son might not combine to throw me overboard, steal my money, and run back to port, I took care to let them perceive my entry of their names and my own as well in the register of the coast-guard. However they proved very honest fellows, and we anchored under Porthcawl point soon after dark that evening.

Having proved to the pilot that he was quite safe here, unless it should come on to blow from south-east, of which there was no symptom, and leaving him under the care of Sandy, who at my expense stood treat to him, I made off for Candleston, not even stopping for a chat with Roger Berkrolles. The Colonel, of course, as well as his sister Lady Bluett, and Rodney, were delighted with what I had to tell them, while the maid herself listened with her face concealed to the tale of her own misfortune. Once or twice she whispered to herself, "Oh my poor father!" and when I had ended she rose from the sofa where Lady Bluett's arm was around her, and went to the Colonel and said, "How soon will you take me to my father?"

"My darling Bertha," said the Colonel, embracing her, as if she had been his daughter, "we will start to-morrow, if Llewellyn thinks the weather quite settled, and the boat quite safe. He knows so much about boats, you see. It would take us a week to go round by land. But we won't start at all, if you cry, my dear!"

I did not altogether like the tone of the Colonel's allusion to me; still less was I pleased when he interrupted Lady Bluett's congratulations, thanks, and fervent praises of my skill, perseverance, and trustiness, in discovering all this villany.

"Humph!" said the Colonel; "I

am not quite sure that this villany would have succeeded so long, unless a certain small boat had proved so adapted for fishing purposes."

"Why, Henry!" cried his sister; "how very unlike you! What an unworthy insinuation! After all Mr. Llewellyn has done; it is positively ungrateful. And he spoke of that boat in this very room, as I can perfectly well remember, not—oh not—I am sure any more than a very few years ago, my dear."

"Exactly," said the Colonel; "too few years ago. If he had spoken of that at the time, as distinctly as he did afterwards, when the heat of inquiry was over, and when Sir Philip himself had abandoned it, I do not see how all this confusion, between the loss of a foreign ship and the casting away of a British boat, could have arisen, or at any rate could have failed to be cleared away. Llewellyn, you know that I do not judge hastily. Sir, I condemn your conduct."

"Oh, Colonel, how dreadful of you! Mr. Llewellyn, go and look at the weather, while I prove to the Colonel his great mistake. You did speak of the boat at the very inquest, in the most noble and positive manner; and nobody would believe you, as you your very self told me. What more could any man do? We are none of us safe, if we do our very best, and have it turned against us."

My conscience all this time was beating, so that I could hear it. This is a gift very good men have, and I have made a point of never failing to cultivate it. In this trying moment, with even a man so kind and blameless suddenly possessed, no doubt, by an evil spirit against me, stanch as rock my conscience stood, and to my support it rose, creditably for both of us.

"Colonel Lougher," my answer was, "you will regret this attack on

the honour of a British officer. One, moreover, whose great grand-father harped in your Honour's family. Captain Bluett understands the build of a boat as well as I do. He shall look at that boat to-morrow morning, and if he declares her to be English-built, you may set me down, with all my stripes and medals, for a rogue, sir. But if he confirms my surety of her being a foreigner, nothing but difference of rank will excuse you, Colonel Lougher, from being responsible to me."

My spirit was up, as you may see; and the honour of the British Navy forced me to speak strongly: although my affection for the man was such that sooner than offend him, I would have my other arm shot away.

"Llewellyn," said the Colonel, with his fine old smile spreading very pleasantly upon his noble countenance; "you are of the peppery order which your old Welsh blood produces. Think no more of my words for the present. And if my nephew agrees with you in pronouncing the boat a foreigner, I will give you full satisfaction by asking your pardon, Llewellyn. It was enough to mislead any man."

Not to dwell upon this mistake committed by so good a man, but which got abroad somehow—though my old friend Crumphy, I am sure, could never have been listening at the door—be it enough in this hurry to say, that on the next morning I was enabled to certify the weather. A smartish breeze from the north-north-west, with the sea rather dancing than running, took poor Bardie to her native coast, from which the hot tide had borne her. Before we set sail, I had been to Sker in Colonel Lougher's two-wheeled gig, and obtained from good Moxy the child's jemmyset from the old oak chest it was stored in.

And now I did a thing which must for ever acquit me of all blame so wrongfully cast upon me. That is to say, I fetched out the old boat, which Sandy Macraw had got covered up; and releasing him in the most generous manner from years and years of backrent, what did I do but hitch her on to the stern of the pilot-yawl, for to tow? Not only this, but I managed that Rodney should sail on board as her skipper, and for his crew should have somebody who had crossed the channel before in that same boat, sixteen years ago, I declare! And they did carry on a bit, now and then, when our sprit-sail hid them from our view. For the day was bright, and the sea was smooth.

The Colonel and I were on board of the yawl, enjoying perfect harmony. For Captain Rodney of course had confirmed my opinion as to the build of the boat, and his uncle desired to beg my pardon, which the largeness of my nature quite refused to hear of. If a man admits that he has wronged me, satisfied I am at once, and do not even point out always, that I never could have done the like to him.

Colonel Lougher had often been at sea, in the time of his active service, and he seemed to enjoy this trip across channel, and knew all the names of the sails and spars. But falling in as we did with no less than three or four small craft on our voyage, he asked me how Delushy's boat could possibly have been adrift for a whole night and day on the channel, without any ship even sighting her. I told him that this was as simple as could be, during that state of the weather. A burning haze, or steam from the land, lay all that time on the water; and the lower part thereof was white, while the upper spread was yellow. Also the sea itself was white from the long-continued calmness, so that

a white boat scarcely would show at half a mile of distance. And even if it did, what sailors were likely to keep a smart look-out in such roasting weather? Men talk of the heat ashore sometimes; but I know that for downright smiting, blinding, and overwhelming sun-power, there is nothing ashore to compare with a ship.

Also I told the Colonel, now that his faith in me was re-established, gliding over the water thus, I was enabled to make plain to him things which if he had been ashore might have lain perhaps a little beyond his understanding. I showed him the set of the tides by tossing corks from his bottles overboard, and begging him to take a glass of my perspective to watch them. And he took such interest in this, and evinced so much sagacity, that in order to carry on my reasoning with any perspicacity, cork after cork I was forced to draw, to establish my veracity.

Because he would argue it out that a boat, unmanned and even unmasted, never could have crossed the channel as Bardie's boat must needs have done. I answered that I might have thought so also, and had done so for years and years, till there came the fact to the contrary; of which I was pretty well satisfied now; and when the boat was produced and sworn to, who would not be satisfied? Also I begged to remind him how strongly the tide ran in our channel, and that even in common weather the ebb of the spring out of Barnstaple river might safely be put at four knots an hour, till Hartland point was doubled. Here, about two in the morning, the flood would catch the little wanderer, and run her up channel some ten or twelve miles, with the night-wind on the starboard-beam driving her also northward. When this was exhausted, the ebb would take her into Swansea Bay almost, being

so light a boat as she was, with a southern breeze prevailing. And then the next flood might well bring her to Sker,—exactly the thing that had come to pass. Moreover I thought, as I told the Colonel (although of course with diffidence), from long acquaintance with tropical waters and the power of the sun upon them, I thought it by no means unlikely that the intense heat of the weather, then for more than six weeks prevailing, might have had some strong effect on the set and the speed of the currents.

However, no more of arguments. What good can they do, when the thing is there, and no reasoning can alter it? Even Parson Chowne might argue, and no doubt would with himself (although too proud with other people), that all he did was right, and himself as good a man as need be.

We ran across channel in some six hours, having a nice breeze abaft the beam, and about the middle of the afternoon we landed at Ilfracombe cleverly. This is a little place lying in a hole, and with great rocks all around it, fair enough to look at, but more easy to fall down than to get up them. And even the Barnstaple road is so steep that the first hill takes nearly two hours of climbing. Therefore, in spite of all eager spirits, we found ourselves forced to stay there that night, for no one would horse us onwards, so late at this November season.

Perhaps, however, it was worth while to lose a few hours for the sake of seeing Delushy's joy in her native land. This, like a newly-opened spring, arose, and could not contain itself. As soon as her foot touched the shore, I began to look forward to a bout of it. For I understand young women now, very well, though the middle-aged are beyond me. These latter I hope to

be up to, if ever I live to the age of fourscore years, as my constitution promises. And if the Lord should be pleased to promote me to the ripe and honest century (as was done to my great-grandfather), then I shall understand old women also, though perhaps without teeth to express it.

However this was a pretty thing, and it touched me very softly. None but those who have roamed as I have understand the heart-ache. For my native land I had it, ever and continually, and in the roar of battle I was borne up by discharging it. And so I could enter into our poor Bardie, going about with the tears in her eyes. For she would not allow me to rest at the inn, as I was fain to do in the society of some ancient fishermen, and to leave the gentlefolk to their own manner of getting through the evening. "Come out," she cried, "old Davy; you are the only one that knows the way about this lovely place." Of course I had no choice but to obey Sir Philip's own grand-daughter, although I could not help grumbling; and thus we began to explore a lane as crooked as a corkscrew, and with ferns like palm-trees feathering. In among them little trickling rills of water tinkled, or were hushed sometimes by moss, and it looked as if no frost could enter through the leafy screen above.

"What a country to be born in! What a country to belong to!" exclaimed the maid continually, sipping from each crystal runnel, and stroking the ferns with reverence. "Uncle Henry, don't you think now that it is enough to make one happy to belong to such a land?"

"Well, my dear," said her Uncle Henry, as she had been ordered to call the Colonel, "I think it would still more conduce to happiness for some of the land to belong to you.

Ah, Llewellyn, I see, is of my opinion."

So I was, and still more so next day, when, having surmounted that terrible hill, we travelled down rich dairy valleys on our road to Barnstaple. Here we halted for refreshment, and to let Delushy rest and beautify herself, although we could see no need of that. And now she began to get so frightened that I was quite vexed with her: her first duty was to do me credit; and how could she manage it, if her eyes were red? The Colonel also began to provoke me, for when I wanted to give the maid a stiff glass of grog to steady her, he had no more sense than to countermand it, and order a glass of cold water!

As soon as we came to Narnton Court, we found a very smart coach in the yard, that quite put to shame our hired chaise, although the good Colonel had taken four horses, so as to land us in moderate style. Of course it was proper that I, who alone could claim Sir Philip's acquaintance, as well as the merit of the whole affair, should have the pleasure of introducing his new grandchild to him; so that I begged all the rest to withdraw, and the only names that we sent in, were Captain Llewellyn and "Miss Delushy." Therefore we were wrong, no doubt, in feeling first a little grievance, then a large-minded impatience, and finally a strong desire—ay, and not the desire alone—to swear, before we got out of it. I speak of myself and Captain Bluett, two good honest sailors, accustomed to declare their meaning since the war enabled them. But Colonel Lougher (who might be said, from his want of active service, to belong to a past generation), as well as Delushy, who was scarcely come into any generation yet,—these two really set an example, good, though hard, to follow.

CHAPTER LXVI.—THE MAID AT LAST IS “IDENTIFIED.”

However, as too often happens, we blamed a good man without cause. A good man rarely deserves much blame; whereas a bad man cannot have too much—whether he has earned it or otherwise—to restrain him from deserving more. The reason why Sir Philip Bampfylde kept us so long waiting, proved to be a sound and valid one; namely, that he was engaged in earnest and important converse with his daughter-in-law, Lady Bampfylde, now wife (if you will please to remember) to Commodore Sir Drake Bampfylde, although by birth entitled the Honourable Isabel Carey, the one that had been so good to me when I was a ferryman; of superior order, certainly; but still, no more than a ferryman!

Since my rise in the world began, I have found out one satisfactory thing—that a man gets on by merit. How long did I despair of this, and smoke pipes, and think over it; seeing many of my friends advancing, by what I call roguery! And but for the war (which proves the hearts and reins of men, as my ancestor says), I might still have been high and dry, being too honest for the fish-trade. However, true merit will tell in the end, if a man contrives to live long enough. So when the beautiful lady came out through the room where I sat waiting, as I touched my venerable forelock to her (as humbly as if for a sixpenny piece), a brave man's honest pride wrought weakness in my eyes, as I gazed at her. I loved her husband; and I loved her; and I thought of the bitter luck between them, which had kept them separate. Partly, of course, the glory of England, and duty of a proud man's birth; partly also bad luck of course, and a style, of

giving in to it; but ten times more than these, the tricks that lower our fellow-creatures.

This noble and stately lady did not at first sight recognise me; but when I had told her in very few words who I was, and what I had done, and how long I had sailed with her husband, and how highly he respected me, her eyes brightened into the old sweet smile, although they bore traces of weeping.

“My name is not ‘Lady Carey,’” she said, for I was calling her thus on purpose, not knowing how she was taking wedlock, and being of opinion that an “honourable miss” ought always to be called a lady. “My name is ‘Lady Bampfylde;’ and I like it, if you please: although I remember, Mr. Llewellyn, what your views are of matrimony. You used to declare them only too plainly, whenever we crossed your ferry, for the purpose, as I used to think, of driving poor Nanette to despair of you.”

“And a lucky thing for me, your ladyship, to have acted so consistently. But his Honour the Commodore, of course, holds the opposite opinion.”

“It is hard to guess the opinions of a commodore always on service. Sir Drake, as I daresay you have heard, can scarcely bear to come home now.”

I saw that she was vexed by something, and also vexed with herself, perhaps, for having even hinted it. For she turned her beautiful face away, and without a word would have left me. But with my usual quickness of step, I ran into the lobby-place, and back in a moment with our Delushy, clinging, like a woodbine to a post. At such moments, I never speak, until women begin with questions. It saves so

much time, to let them begin; because they are sure to insist on it. Meanwhile Delushy was making the prettiest curtsy that presence of mind permitted.

"You lovely dear, why, who are you?" cried Lady Bampfylde, with a start, that madame dread hysterics.

"I do not know, Madam," answered Delushy, with the whole of her mind so well in hand, by reason of years of suffering; "but many people believe me to be the Bertha Bampfylde that was lost, nearly twenty years ago."

"What! The baby! The baby—at least one of the babies—that my husband—David Llewellyn, this is very cruel of you."

And that was all the thanks I got! While, what could I have done otherwise? In five minutes more, she would have been off in her grand coach, with six horses, after offending Sir Philip so much, that he could not have borne to look after her; although, of course, he was now coming out like a gentleman to a visitor. Seeing such a pay-night coming, and a large confusion, I begged Colonel Lougher and Captain Bluett to keep for a little while out of it. And nothing could more truly prove how thoroughly these were gentlemen, than that they withdrew to a niche of the under-butler's pantry, wherein they could hear no word of it.

It was now my place to stand forward bravely, and to put things clearly; without any further loss of reason, and even without considering how these delicate ladies might contrive to take my meaning nicely. To spare good ladies from any emotion, is one of the main things of my life; although they show such a want of gratitude, when I have done my utmost. But I had no scruple about frightening Sir Philip, because of his confidence in the Lord. Therefore, abandoning

Lady Bampfylde to the care of her maid, who was running up from the servants' hall to look after her, I fixed my hook (screwed on for the purpose) firmly into Delushy's sleeve, that she might not faint, or run away, or do anything else unreasonable, and I led her up the long hall to meet Sir Philip, as he came down the steps at the upper end thereof.

The old General looked rather haggard and feeble, as if the power of his life were lowered by perpetual patience. But something had happened to vex him, no doubt, in his interview with Lady Bampfylde, so that he walked with more than his usual stateliness and dignity. He had never beheld me as a one-armed man, nor yet in my present uniform, for I took particular care to avoid him during the day or two spent at his house before I went to Burrington, so for a moment he did not know me, but gazed with surprise at the lovely figure which I was sustaining so clumsily.

"Sir Philip Bampfylde, allow me," I said, stretching forth my right hand to him, "to repay you for some of the countless benefits you have heaped upon me, by presenting you with your long-lost granddaughter—and your grandson to come afterwards."

"It cannot be; it cannot be," was all he could say, although for so many years he had shown his faith that it must be. His fine old countenance turned as white as the silver hair that crowned it, and then as red as it could have been in the hopeful blush of boyhood. And the pure and perfect delicacy of high birth quickened with sorrow prevented him from examining Delushy, as he longed to do.

"Speak up, child, speak up," said I, giving her a haul with my hook as when first I landed her; "can you tell your dear Grandfather how glad you are to see him?"

"That I will, with all my heart," the maiden answered bashfully, yet lifting her eyes to the old man's face with pride as well as reverence; "as soon as I perceive that you, sir, wish to hear me say it."

"You will not think me rude—I am scarcely strong enough for this—it has come on me so suddenly. And it must be quite as bad for you. Lead the young lady to a chair, Llewellyn. Or, stay; I beg your pardon. It will perhaps be better to call our kind and worthy house-keeper."

Sir Philip perceived a thing which had escaped me, though brought to my notice beforehand by our good Colonel Lougher; that is to say, how hard it would be upon the feelings of this young girl, to have her "identity" (as Crowner Bowles entitled it) discussed in her own presence. Therefore she was led away by that regular busybody the house-keeper, Mrs. Cockhanterbury; while I begged leave to introduce Colonel Lougher and Captain Bluett to Sir Philip Bampfylde. And then when all had made their bows and all due salutations, I was called upon to show my documents and explain the evidence so carefully gathered by me.

It is as much above my power, as beyond my purpose, to tell how that ancient and noble gentleman, after so much worry from the long neglect of Providence, took (as if he had never deserved it) this goodness of the Lord to him. Of course, in my class of life, we cannot be always dwelling on children; whose nature is provoking always, and in nothing more so than that they will come when not wanted; yet are not forthcoming with the folk who can afford them. Nevertheless, I think that if the Lord had allowed any thief of a fellow (much more one of His own ministers) to steal two grandchildren of mine, and make a savage

of one baby, and of the other a cast-away, the whole of my piety would have been very hard pushed to produce any gratitude. Sir Philip, however, did appear most truly desirous to thank God for his great mercy vouchsafed to him; even before he had thoroughly gone through the ins and outs of the evidence. For he begged us to excuse him, while he should go to see to our comfort; and two fine bottles of wine (white and red) appeared and began to disappear, under my hatches mainly, before our noble host came back to set us a good example. And when he came he had quite forgotten to dust the knees of some fine kerseymere, and the shins of black silk stockings.

Deep sense of religion is quite in its place when a man has had one arm shot off, still more so if both arms are gone, and after a leg, indispensable. Nevertheless it must not be intruded upon any one; no, not even by the chaplain, till the doctor shakes his head. Knowing also that Colonel Lougher had a tendency towards it (enough to stop the decanters if he should get upon that subject with the arguments it sticks fast in), I was delighted to see Delushy slipping into the room as if she had known the place for a century. The General clearly had managed to visit her during the time of his absence from us; what passed between them matters not, except that he must have acknowledged her. For now she went up to him and kissed him; rather timidly, perhaps, but still she touched his forehead. Then he arose and stood very upright, as if he had never begun to stoop, and passing his arm round her delicate waist, both her hands he took in his. And as they faced us, we were struck with the likeness between blooming youth and worn but yet majestic age.

"Gentlemen," he said, "or rather I should call you kind good friends, you have brought me not only a grandchild, but the very one I would have chosen if the whole world gave me choice. By-and-by you shall see her stand by the picture of my dear and long-lamented wife. That, I think, will convince you that we want no further evidence. For me, these thumb nails are enough. Bertha, show your thumb-nails."

She laughed her usual merry laugh (although she had been crying so) while she spread her dainty hands, exactly as she used to spread them, when she was only two years old, with me alone to look at her.

"Here it is, sir," cried the General, overlooking me, in the rush of his sentiments towards the Colonel: "Here is the true Bampfylde mark. Even the Bassets have it not, nor the Traceys, nor the St. Albyns. Will you oblige me by observing that these two thumb-nails have a most undoubted right and left to

them? Bertha, do try to keep still for a moment."

"Well, I declare," said the Colonel, calmly taking out his eye-glass; "yes, I declare you are right, my good sir. Here is a most evident right and left—Andalusia, do stand still—not only in the half-moons at the base, but in the vein, and what I may call the radiants of the pinkness. I cannot express my meaning, but—my darling, come and kiss me."

This Delushy did at once, as for years she used to do; and not being certain even now whether she ought to forsake the Colonel for a General, though proved to be a newly-turned-up Grandfather. None of us had thought of her, and the many shifts of female wind, coming to pass perhaps inside her little brain and heart so. Wherefore this poor David, who desires always to be the last, but by force of nature is compelled for ever to take the lead—I it was who got her off to bed, that we might talk of her.

CHAPTER LXVII.—DOG EATS DOG.

To a man, whose time of life begins to be a subject of some consideration to him, when the few years still in hope can be counted on a hand, and may not need a finger; and with the tide of this world ebbing to the inevitable sea—to him there is scarcely any sweet and gentle pastime more delightful than to sit on a bank of ancient moss, beside a tidal river, and watch the decreasing waters, and prove his own eternity by casting a pebble into them.

Hence it was that Sir Philip Bampfylde, on the very morning after I gave him back his grandchild, sate gazing into the ebb of the Tawe, some fifty yards below the spot, whence Jack Wildman's father carried off so wickedly that

helpless pair of children. Here it was my privilege to come up to Sir Philip, and spread before him my humble reasons for having preferred the kitchen last night to the dining-room and the drawing-room. It was consistent with my nature; and he, though wishing otherwise, agreed not to be offended.

Then I asked him how the young lady (whose health every one of us had honoured, all over the kitchen-table) had contrived to pass the night, and whether she had seen her father yet. He said she had slept pretty well considering, but that as concerned her father, they had not thought it wise to let her see him, until the doctor came. There was no telling how it might act upon Squire Philip's constitu-

tion, after so many years of misery, cobwebs, and desolation. For Providence had not gifted him with a mind so strong as his father's was, and the sudden break in on the death of the mind has been known, in such a case, to lead to bodily disease. But few things vexed the General more than that wretched lie of Chowne's, and slander upon a loyal family while in service of the Crown. What Captain Drake had landed from the boat was not an arm-chest, but a chest of plate and linen, belonging to his brother, which he would no longer borrow, while the Squire so cruelly dealt with him.

Then I asked Sir Philip whether the ancient builder over at Appledore had been sent for to depose to the boat; for we had brought that little craft on the top of our coach from Ilfracombe. The General said that I might see him even now examining her, if I would only take the trouble to look round the corner; but he himself was so well convinced, without any further testimony, that he did not even care to hear what the old man had to say of it, any more than he cared for the jemmyset. This, however, is not my manner of regarding questions. Not from any private fountains of conviction, and so on, but out of the mouths of many witnesses shall a thing be established. Therefore I hastened round the corner, to sift this ancient boatwright.

As surly a fellow as ever lived, and from his repugnance to my uniform, one who had made more money, I doubt, by the smuggler's keg than the shipwright's adze. Entering into his nature at sight, I took the upperhand of him, as my rank insisted on.

"Hark ye now, master ship-carpenter, where was this little craft put together, according to your opinion?"

Either this fellow was deaf as a post, or else he meant to insult me, for he took no more notice of me than he did of the pigs that were snuffling at beech-nuts down by the side of the landing-place. I am not the right man to put up with insolence; therefore I screwed my hammer-head into the socket below my muscles, and therewith dealt him a tap on his hat, just to show what might come afterwards.

Receiving this administration, and seeing that more was very likely from the same source to be available, what did this rogue do but endeavour to show the best side of his manners. Wherefore, to let him have his say, here is his opinion.

"This here boat be the same as I built, year as my wife were took with quinzey, and were called home by the Lord. I built her for Wild-duck of Appledore, a little dandy-rigged craft as used to be hired by Cap'en Bampfylde. To this here boat I can swear, although some big rogue have been at work, painting her, as knew not how to paint; and a lubber, no doubt, every now and then patching her up, or repairing of her. The name in her stern have been painted up from 'Wild-duck, Appledore,' into 'Santa Lucia, Salvador;' three or four letters are my own, the rest are the work of some pirate. She be no more foreign-build than I be. But a sailor accustomed to foreign parts would be sure to reckon so, reason why I served my time with a builder over to Port-au-Prince. And I should like to see the man anywhere round these here parts as can tuck in the bends as I does."

Leaving this conceited fellow to his narrow unpleasantness, I turned my head, and there beheld Captain Bluett harkening.

"Come," he cried out, in his hearty manner, "what a cook's boiling of fools we are! Here we

are chewing a long-chewed quid, while the devil that brewed this gale of wind may fly far away, and grin at us. Lewellyn, do you mean to allow——”

“Hush,” I said softly, for that low shipwright showed his eyes coming up under his cap. And I saw that he was that particular villain, after his scurrilous words about me, who would sell his soul to that wretch of a Chowne for half-a-crown a-week almost. Therefore I led our young Captain Bluett well away out of this fellow’s hearing.

“Davy,” said he, “we all know your courage, your readiness, and your resources. Still you appear to be under a spell—and you know you are superstitious about this cunning and cowardly blackguard, who frightens the whole of this country, as he never could frighten Glamorganshire.”

“I have no fear of him, sir,” I said; “I will go with you to confront him.”

“Why, your teeth are ready to chatter, Llewellyn; and your lips are blue? You who stood like a milestone, they tell me, at the helm of the Goliath, or like a clock going steadily tick, before we fired a shot, and with both shell and shot through your grey whiskers——”

“But, Captain, a minister of the Lord——”

“Master, a minister of the devil—once for all, to-day I go to horse-whip him, if he is young enough; or to pull his nose, if he is old enough, and old Harry be with him in choice of the two! Zounds, sir, is it a thing to laugh at?”

Rodney Bluett was well known to every one who served under him for the mildness of his language, and the want of oaths he had; and so, of course, for his self-control, and the power of his heart when it

did break forth. Everybody loved him, because he never cursed any one at a venture, and kept himself very close to facts, however hard driven by circumstances; so that I was now amazed to hear this young man spoil my pipe with violent emotions.

“Have you consulted Sir Philip?” I asked. “It is his place to take up the question.”

“What question? There is no question. The thing is proved. My duty is plain. Sir Philip is too old to see it. The Squire is a spooney. The Commodore is not here yet. I have spoken to his wife, who is a very sweet and wise lady; and she agrees with me that it will save the family a world of scandal; and perhaps failure of the law, for me to take the law into my own hands, and thrash this blackguard within an inch of his life.”

“To be sure, and save her husband from the risk of tackling a desperate man. It is most wise on her part. But I beg you, my dear sir, for the sake of your dear uncle and your good mother, keep clear of this quarrel. You know not the man you have to deal with. Even if you can thrash him, which is no easy business, he will shoot you afterwards. He is the deadliest shot in the county!”

“Hurrah!” cried Rodney, tossing up his hat; “that entirely settles it. Come along, old fellow, and show us the way: and not a word to any one.”

Now this may seem a very mad resolve for a man of my sense to give into. But whether I turned myself this way or that, I could see no chance of bettering it. If I refused to go, young Rodney (as I could see by the set of his mouth) would go alone, and perhaps get killed, and then how could any of the family ever look at me again? On the other hand, if I should go to the Colonel,

or to the General, for opinion, and to beg them to stop it, my interference—nine chances to one—would only end in giving offence among the superior orders. Add to this my real desire to square it out with Chowne himself, after all his persecution, and you may be able to forgive me for getting upon horseback, after many years of forbearance, and with my sugar-nippers screwed on, to lay hold by the forestay, if she should make bad weather. Also, I felt it my duty to take a double-barrelled pistol heavily loaded, and well primed.

Captain Rodney forged ahead so on a real hunting craft, that my dappled gray, being warranted not to lurch me overboard, could not keep in line whatever sail I made upon her. My chief rule in life is not to hurry. What good ever comes of it? People only abuse you, and your breath is too short to answer them. Moreover, I felt an uneasy creaking in my bends from dousing forward, and then easing backward, as a man must do who knows how to ride. The Captain was wroth with me, out of all reason; but as he could not find the way to Nympton Moors without me, I was enabled to take my leisure, having the surety of overgetting him when the next cross-road came. Therefore it was late afternoon when we turned into the black fir-grove which led up to the house of Chowne, and Rodney Bluett clutched the big whip in his hand severely. For we had asked at the little inn of which I spoke a long time ago, whether the Parson was now at home.

"Ay, that 'un be," said the man with a grin, for we did not see the landlady; "but ye best way not to go nigh 'un."

Already I seemed not to feel as I hoped, in the earlier stage of the journey. My thoughts had been very upright for a while, and spirit-

ed, and delighted; but now I began to look at things from a different point of view almost. It is not man's business to worry his head about righting of wrongs in this world, unless they are done to himself; and if so, revenge is its name, and an ugly one. Long life leads one to forgive, when to carry it on would be troublesome.

Through the drip of dying leaves, the chill of dull November now began to darken over us as we turned the corner of Chowne's own road, and faced his lonely mansion. The house had a heavy and sullen look, according to my ideas, not receiving light and pleasure of the sun when possible. Heavy fir-trees overhung it, never parting with their weight; and the sunset (when there was any) could not pierce the holm-oaks.

"What a gloomy and devilish place!" cried Rodney Bluett, beginning to tremble from some unknown influence. "Upon my soul, if I lived here, I should be hatching plots myself. Or is it the nature of the man that has made the place so horrible?"

"Let us go back," said I; "come back, my good sir, I conjure you. Such a man should be left to God, to punish in His own good time."

"Hark!" cried Rodney, pulling up, and listening through the gloomy wood; "that was a woman's scream, I am sure. Is he murdering some more little ones?"

We listened, and heard a loud piercing shriek, that made our hair stand on end almost, so mad was it, and so unearthly; and then two more of yet wilder agony; and after that a long low wailing.

"On, on!" cried Rodney Bluett; "you know these paths, gallop on, Davy."

"You go first," I answered; "your horse is fresher; I am coming—to be sure I am—do you think I am frightened?"

"Well, I don't know," he replied; "but I am not ashamed to own that I am."

Clapping spurs to his horse he dashed on; and thoroughly miserable as I felt, there was nothing for me but to follow him.

In the name of the Lord, what a sight we came on, where the drive sweeps round at the corner of the house! Under a dark tree of some sort, and on a garden bench, we discovered the figures of two women. Or rather, one sate on the bench; the other lay stretched on the ground, with her head cast recklessly back on the ledge, her hair spread in masses over it, and both hands pressed on her eyes and ears, to shut out sight and hearing. Her lips were open, and through her white teeth came wails of anguish, that would have been shrieks, if nature had not failed her.

But the elder woman sate upright, in scorn of all such weakness, with her gaunt figure drawn like a cable taut, no sign of a tear on her shrunken cheeks, and the whole of her face as numb and cold as an iced figure-head in the Arctic seas. Yet no one, with knowledge of the human race, could doubt which of these two suffered most.

We reined up our horses, and gazed in terror, for neither of them noticed us; and then we heard, from inside the house, sounds that made our flesh creep. Barking, howling, snapping of teeth, baying as of a human bloodhound, frothy splutterings of fury, and then smothered yelling.

"Her have a gat 'un now," cried a clown, running round the end of the house, as if he were enjoying it. "Reckon our passon wun't baite much moore, after Passon Jack be atop of 'un."

"Oh sir, oh sir, oh for God's sake, sir," cried the poor lady who had lain on the ground, rushing up to

us, and kneeling, and trying to get hold of us; "you must have come to stop it, sir. Only one hour—allow him one hour, dear, dear sirs, for repentance. He has not been a good man, I know, but I am his own wife, good kind sirs—and if he could only have a little time, if it were only half an hour—he might, he might——"

Here a sound of throttling came through a broken window-pane, and down she fell insensible.

"What does it mean?" cried Rodney Bluett; "is it murder, madness, or suicide? Follow me, Davy. Here I go, anyhow, into the thick of it."

He dashed through the window; and I with more caution, cocking my pistol, followed him, while I heard the clown shouting after us—

"Danged vules both of 'e. Bide outside, bide outside, I tell 'e."

Oh that we had remained outside! I have been through a great deal of horrible sights, enough to harden any man, and cure him of womanly squeamishness. Yet never did I behold, or dream of, anything so awful as the scene that lay before me. People were longing to look at it now, but none (save ourselves) durst enter.

It was Chowne's own dining-room, all in the dark, except where a lamp had been brought in by a trembling footman, who ran away, knowing that he brought this light for his master to be strangled by. And in the corner now lay his master, smothered under a feather-bed; yet with his vicious head fetched out in the last rabid struggle to bite. There was the black hair, black face, and black tongue, shown by the frothy wainscot, or between it and the ticking. On the feather-bed lay exhausted, and with his mighty frame convulsed, so that a child might master him, Parson Jack Rambone, the strongest man,

whose strength (like all other powers) had laid a horrible duty upon him. Sobbing with all his great heart he lay, yet afraid to take his weight off, and sweating at every pore with labour, peril of his life, and agony.

"Oh Dick, Dick," he said, quite softly, and between his pantings; "how many larks have we had together, and for me to have to do this to you! I am sure you knew me, before you died. I think you know me now, Dick. Oh, for God's sake, shut your eyes. Darling Dick! are you dead, are you dead? You are the very cleverest fellow ever I came across of. You can do it, if you like. Oh, dear Dick, Dick, my boy, do shut your eyes!"

He stood looking at them, with no power to go up to them; all ex-

perience failed us as to what was the proper thing to do, till I saw that Chowne's face ought to have a napkin over it. None had been laid for dinner; but I knew where butlers keep them.

When I had done this, Parson Jack (who could not escape from the great black eyes) arose, and said, "I thank you, sir." He staggered so that we had to support him; but not a word could we say to him. "I am bitten in two places, if not more," he rather gasped than said to us, as he laid bare his enormous arms. "I care not much. I will follow my friend. Or if the Lord should please to spare me, henceforth I am an altered man. And yet, for the sake of my family, will you heat the kitchen poker?"

CHAPTER LXVIII.—THE OLD PITCHER AT THE WELL AGAIN.

It helps a thoughtless man on his road towards a better kingdom, to get a glimpse, every now and then, of such visitations of the Lord. When I was a little boy, nothing did me so much good in almost all the Bible, as to hear my father read the way in which Herod was eaten of worms. And now in mature years, I received quite a serious turn by the death of this Parson Chowne of ignominious canine madness. And still more, when I came to know by what condign parental justice this visitation smote him.

For while the women were busy up-stairs by candle-light, and with some weeping, it fell to Parson Rambone's lot to lay the truth before us. This great man took at once to Captain Rodney Bluett, as if he had known him for years; nor did he fail to remember me, and in his distress to seek some comfort from my simple wisdom. So having packed all the country boobies, constables, doctors, and so on, out

of the house, we barred the door, made a bright fire in the kitchen, and sat down in front of it, while a nice cook began to toss up some sweetbreads, and eggs and ham-collops, and so on, for our really now highly necessary sustenance.

You may remember the time I met with a very nice fellow (then Chowne's head-groom), who gave me a capital supper of tripe elegantly stewed by a young cook-maid, himself lamenting the stress (laid upon him by circumstances) not to make his wife of her. He told me then with a sigh of affection between his knife and fork, that social duties compelled him instead to marry a publican's daughter, with fifty pounds down on the nail, he believed, if it was a penny. Nevertheless he felt confident that all would be ordered aright in the end. Now Providence had not allowed such a case of faith to pass unrewarded. He married the publican's daughter, got her money, and

paid the last sad duties to her, out of the pocket of his father-in-law, in a Christian-minded manner. And then back he came to Nympton Rectory, and wedded that same cook-maid, who now was turning our ham so cleverly with the egg-slice. Thus we could speak before them both, without the least constraint; and indeed he helped us much by his knowledge of the affairs of the family. Also two Justices of the Peace, who had signed the warrant for poor Chowne's end, upon the report of the doctors, but could find no one of strength and courage to carry it out, except Parson Jack; these sate with us to get their supper, before the long cold ride over the moors. And there sate Parson Jack himself, with his thick hands trembling, hopeless of eating a morsel, but dreading to be left alone for a moment.

"What a difference it will make in all this neighbourhood, to be sure!" So said one of their worships.

"Ay, that it will," answered brother magistrate. "Since Tom Faggus died, there has not been such a man to be found, nowhere round these here parts."

"No, nor Tom Faggus himself," said the other: "a noble highwayman he were; but for mind, not fit to hold a candle to our lamented friend now lying up there in the counterpane."

Parson Jack shuddered, and shook his great limbs, and feigned to have done so on purpose; and then in defiance collected himself, and laid his iron hand on the table, watching every great muscle, to see how long he could keep it from trembling. Then I arose and grasped his hand—for nobody else understood him at all—and he let me take it with reluctance, wonder, and then deep gratitude. He had

been saying to himself—as I knew, though his lips never moved; and his face was set, in scorn of all our moralising—within himself he had been thinking, "I am Jack Ketch; I am worse; I am Cain. I have murdered my own dear brother." And I, who had seen him brand his bitten arm with the red-hot poker, laying the glowing iron on, until the blood hissed out at it, I alone could gage the strength of heart that now enabled him to answer my grasp with his poor scorched arm, and to show his great tears, and check them.

Enough of this. I cannot stand these melancholy subjects. A man of irreproachable life, with a tendency towards gaiety, never must allow his feelings to play ducks and drakes with him. If the justice of the Almighty fell upon Chowne—as I said it would—let Chowne die, and let us hope that his soul was not past praying for. It is not my place to be wretched, because the biggest villain I ever knew showed his wit by dying of a disease which gave him power to snap at the very devil, when in the fulness of time he should come thirsting to lay hold of him. And but for my purpose of proving how purely justice does come home to us, well contented would I be to say no more about him. Why had he been such a villain through life? Because he was an impostor. Why did he die of rabid madness, under the clutch of his own best friend? Because he lashed his favourite hound to fly at the throat of his own grandfather.

Not only does it confirm one's faith in the honesty of breeding, but it enables me to acquit all the Chownes of Devonshire—and a fine and wholesome race they are—of ever having produced such a scamp, in true course of legitimacy; also enables me not to point out, so

much as to leave all my readers to think of, the humble yet undeniable traces of old Davy's sagacity.

What had I said to Mrs. Steelyard, when she overbore me so, upon an empty stomach? "Madam," I said, "your son, you mean!" And it proved to be one of my famous hits, at a range beyond that of other men. When great stirs happen, truth comes out; as an earthquake starts the weasels.

Everybody knows what fine old age those wandering gypsies come to. The two most killing cares we have, are money, and reputation. Here behold gypsy wisdom! The disregard of the latter of the two does away with the plague of the former. They take what they want; while we clumsy fellows toil for the cash as the only way to get the good estimation. Hence it was that Chowne's grandfather came about stealing as lively as ever, at the age of ninety. A wiry and leathery man he was, and had once been a famous conjurer. And now in his old age he came to sleep in his grandson's barn, and to live on his grandson's ducks, potatoes, and pigeons. This was last harvest-time, just as Chowne was enjoying his bit of cub-hunting.

Turning in from his sport one day, in a very sulky humour, with the hounds he was educating, the Parson caught his grandfather withdrawing in a quiet manner from the hen-roost. Not knowing who it was (for his mother had never explained a thing to him, not even that she was his mother) he thought it below his dignity to ride after this old fellow. But at his heels stalked a tall young hound, who had vexed him all day by surliness, and was now whipped in for punishment. "At him—'loo boy!" he called out; "Hike forrard, catch him by the leg, boy!" But the hound only showed his teeth and

snailed; so that Chowne let out his long lash at him. In a moment the dog sprang at his master who was riding a low cob-horse, and bit him in the thigh and the horse in the shoulder, and then skulked off to his kennel. The hound was shot, and the horse shared his fate in less than six weeks afterwards; and as for the Parson, we know too well what they were forced to do with him.

In her first horror, that stony woman, even Mrs. Steelyard, when her son came ravening at her, could not keep her secret. "It is the judgment of God," she cried; "after all there is a God. He set the dogs at his grandfather, and now he would bite his own mother!" How she had managed to place him in the stead of the real Chowne heir, I never heard, or at least no clear account of it; for she was not (as we know already) one who would answer questions. Let him rest, whoever he was. His end was bad enough even for him.

Enough of this fright—for it was a fright even to me, I assure you—let us come back to the innocent people injured so long by his villainy. To begin with Parson Jack. Never in all his life had he taken a stroke towards his own salvation, until by that horrible job he earned repentance, fear, and conscience. And not only this (for none of these would have stood him in any service with Chowne still at his elbow), but that the face,—which had drawn him for years, like a loadstone of hell, to destruction,—now ever present in its terror, till his prayers got rid of it, shone in the dark like the face of a scarecrow, if ever he durst think of wickedness. His wife found the benefit of this change, and so did his growing family, and so did the people who flocked to his church, in the pleasure of being afraid of him. In the roads, he

might bide; but in his surplice, he was bound to behave himself, or at least he must bite the churchwarden first. Yet no one would have him to sprinkle a child, until a whole year was over. And then he restored himself, under a hint from a man beyond him in intellect; he made everybody allow that the poker had entirely cured him, by preaching from the bottom of his chest, with a glass of water upon the cushion, a sermon that stirred every heart, with the text, "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?"

I quit him with sorrow; because I found him a man of true feeling, and good tobacco. We got on together so warmly that expense alone divided us. He would have had me for parish-clerk, if I could have seen my way to it.

What prevails with a man like me, foremost first of everything? Why, love of the blessed native land—which every good Welshman will love me for. I may have done a thing, now and then, below our native dignity, except to those who can enter into all the things we look at. It is not our nature altogether, to go for less than our value. We know that we are of the oldest blood to be found in this ancient island, and we ask nothing more than to be treated as the superior race should be.

In the presence of such great ideas, who cares what becomes of me? I really feel that my marriage to Polly, and prolongation of a fine old breed, scarcely ought to be spoken of. A man who has described the battle of the Nile need not dwell on matrimony.

Hurried speech does not become me on any other subject. Everybody has the right to know, and everybody does know, how the whole of North Devon was filled with joy, talk, and disputation, as to Commo-

dore Bampfylde and the brightness of his acquittal. They drew him from Barnstaple in a chaise, with only two springs broken, men having taken the horses out, and done their best at collar-work. He would have gladly jumped out and kicked them, but for the feeling of their goodwill.

Nothing would have detracted from this, and the feasts that were felt to be due upon it, if Squire Philip had only known how not to die at a time when nobody was seasonably called on to think of death. But when he learned the shame inflicted by himself on his ancient race, through trusting Chowne, and misbelieving his brother out of the self-same womb; and, above all, when he learned that Chowne was the bastard of a gypsy, he cast himself into his brother's arms, fetched one long sigh, and departed to a better world, with his hat on.

This was the best thing that he could do, if he had chosen the time aright; and it saved a world of trouble. Sir Philip felt it a good bit of course; and so did Sir Drake Bampfylde. Nevertheless, if a living man withdraws into a shell so calmly, what can he expect more lively than his undertakers?

This was good, and left room for Harry, or rather young Philip Bampfylde, to step into the proper shoes, and have practice how to walk in them. Yet he was so caught with love of service, and of the navy, and so mad about Nelson, that the General could not help himself; but let him go to sea again.

Nelson is afloat just now. The Crappos and the Dons appear to have made up their minds against us; and the former have the insolence to threaten a great invasion. If I only had two arms, I would leave my Polly to howl about me. As it is, they have

turned me into a herring! Colonel Lougher has raised a regiment, and I am first drill-sergeant!

Our dear Maid of Sker would also give her beautiful son, only six months old, Bampfylde Lougher Bluett, to go to the wars, and to fight the French; if any one could only show her the way to do without him. He cocks up his toes, in a manner which proves that his feet are meant for ratlines.

How the war is raging! I run to and fro, upon hearing of Felix Farley's Journal, and am only fit to talk of it. Sir Philip comes down, with his best tobacco, whenever he stops at Candleston. And a craft has been built for me on purpose, by the old fellow at Appledora, and her name it is the "Maid of Sker"—to dance across the Channel, whenever a one-armed man can navigate. Colonel Lougher, and even Lady Bluett, have such trust in me, that they cross if their dear Delushy seems to pine too much for her husband. And the Maid herself has brought her son, as proud as if he came out of a wreck, to exhibit him to Moxy, and Roger, and Bunny, and Stradling the clerk—in a word, to all the parish, and the extra-parochial district.

Now I hope that nobody will ask me any more questions concerning any one, male or female. If I cannot speak well of a person—my rule is to be silent.

Hezekiah found his knavery altogether useless. He scraped himself home at last; and built a bellows-organ at Bridgend, with a 74-

gun crash to it. His reputation is therefore up—especially since he rejoined the church—in all churches that can afford him. Yet he will not always own that I was his salvation. Hepzibah prophesies nothing, except that Polly's little son, "David Llewellyn," will do something wonderful, to keep the ancient name up.

It may be so. And I think that he will. But his father never did it. How many chances have I missed! How many times might I have advanced to stern respectability! Yet some folk will like me better, and I like myself no less, for having pretended to be no more than I am—a poor frail fellow.

The children still come down to the well, with three of our Bunny's foremost, they get between my knees, and open blue or brown eyes up at me; in spite of Roger Berkrolles nodding to instil more manners, some of the prettiest stroke my white hair, coaxing for a story. Then they push forward little Davy, thinking that I spoil him so, because of his decided genius giving such promise of bard-hood—already it would do you good to hear him on the Jew's harp. Nevertheless I answer firmly, nine times out of ten at least—

"Little dears," is all I say, "Captain Davy is getting old. It is hard to tell a tale, but easy to find fault with it. You tell me that my left arm will grow quite as long as my right one, if I only will shake it about, and keep a hollow sleeve on. My pets, when I get another arm, I will tell you another story."

THE BRITISH TOURIST IN NORWAY.

I AM a man of business. When asked "What line?" I generally say, "Rather hard than soft." But no matter—I am at present off the line. Suffice it to say that I do not dislike my business; but, *per contra*, I do very much like a few weeks of leisure and recreation far beyond its reach or influence. I follow no method in these relaxations of the yoke of life—method seems to me to be but a continuation of the yoke in a new form, and to poison relaxation. But it is my general aim to get in among such objects of art or nature as are the most worthy of enjoyment—picture and statue galleries, great buildings, and the vestiges of departed empires for the one; mountains, gorges, snowy peaks, glaciers, torrents, and forests for the other. So in a careless way I have wandered over nearly all the best scenery of these islands, and a good deal of the best to be seen elsewhere in Europe. You have on other occasions afforded me space for some rambling recollections of such wanderings. I believe they serve a trifling, yet a pleasant, and so far a useful purpose. They are gossip for the guidance of others.

No doubt we have now a marvellously rich traveller's library of guide-books, and every one who goes about the world is deeply indebted to those who have compiled them. Still the man of educated tastes, who is devising the best investment for his coming weeks of recreation, likes to have a chat with a friend who has gone over the ground. The guide-book is for reference more than rumination. It is all measured off and graduated according to scales which do not tally with the sympathies of every reader. Hence the desire to obtain in gossip the matter

of mere personal interest that index and page may not yield. It is my desire to be, as far as print will permit, the informing party in the gossip; and that a dubious reader may judge whether we have common sympathies that will go far to make an equivalent for personal communion with a travelled friend, I offer him a word or two of explanation.

I have a deep reverence for explorers of Africa and the Rocky Mountains—for all men who lead lives of wild and daring adventure, that in the gratification of a passion of their own strong natures they may benefit the world. A percentage of the same respect I have for your Alpine Club sort of people, who will give year after year, and much money, hardship, and danger, to the object of getting at some special snow-covered summit as yet untrodden by man. Somewhat of the same character are the adventurous young fellows who spend a year or two in what they call "sport" in the Prairies, or go a-yachting for a like period among the icebergs. But only a few of us can do these things, even if they were desirable for all; and among the excluded are many who can draw hearty enjoyment out of the crumbs of such a way of life as may fall to their humbler lot.

The great secret, in my opinion, in such a small investment of human happiness as I have referred to, is absolutely to follow inclination, and to disdain the uniform beaten path of the guide-books on the one side, and, on the other, ambitious projects to be attempted for purposes of paltry notoriety. Take it all easily. If you lay down a close-fitted scheme of operations, you either break down in the attempt, probably before the accomplishment of the

main object, or you burden yourself with a responsibility of activity, watchfulness, and anxiety, to which your ordinary business, when you return to it, feels like a genuine relaxation. First of all, in such a question as trying Norway, examine yourself carefully on the question whether you really love mountain scenery—love it so well that long journeying to get at your mountain ground, and cold, and heat, and fatigue after you have reached it, all come welcome to you for the sake of that love of the mountain. If your honest conscience tells you otherwise, better resolve to disport yourself in Belgium or the Rhenish provinces, surrounded by all abundance of hock, and beer, and tobacco, and sausages, with so much only of mountain peril and adventure as leads you to the top of some verdant mount where stands a temple sacred to the dispensation of these comforts and luxuries after the approved fashion of Herman. It is surely time that there should come an end of that national folly that sets our sons and daughters to “do” some established piece of geography for the sake of “saying” they have done it. Our kinsmen of America, by the way, participate in this mania, and are enlarging on it as on everything they take in hand. I remember once seeing at Antwerp a young couple from New York, who were “doing Europe.” London and Paris they had got through—one day to each, but never mind. That both had been visited was a triumphant fact beyond the power of fate to undo. But there was a third thing to be done—Switzerland and the Alps, and the term for their inevitable embarkation to recross the Atlantic was running so near as to place this achievement in frightful peril. Their terrors and anxieties aroused a sympathetic feeling among the British tourists, whose

hopes and fears lay within a narrower compass. After being fully examined in committee, the great feat was shown to be possible. If they missed no train, and if no train were detained beyond its time, they might set foot on a point of Swiss soil whence it was possible to get a glimpse of the snowy tops of the Oberland mountains, provided that at the critical moment the sky were perfectly cloudless. It was a costly and fatiguing affair had success been certain; but then consider the splendid stakes played for—to have been in Switzerland—to have seen the Alps!

We all hoped success to them, for they were amiable and simple, and they moved us with their sad tales of disappointment in minor matters, for, like our own tourists, they had grievously miscalculated distances, and expected between place and place to meet many things not there. Queen Mary's apartments in Holyrood were not to be found in London, nor was Fingal's Cave to be met in the Channel. They were not singular in making such geographical confusion regarding places so distant from their own home. It is common to others besides tourists. A French novelist was laughed at in this country for enabling Mary Queen of Scots in a morning ride from her prison at Bolton to behold the tops of her native Grampians. But Sir Walter Scott, the most truthful of all romancers in his adherence to geographical and historical conditions, was as far out of his reckoning when in ‘Anne of Geierstein’ he made the two English travellers encounter “the magnificent and yet fearful horrors of the glaciers” in travelling from Lucerne to Basle.

All this is appropriate to the first great question of him who, when the time for the critical decision approaches, casts a wistful eye on Norway—how is he to get there and

back? And when I say "there," I mean that district of Norway where he will find its grand and peculiar scenery. Norway, Sweden, and Denmark are, in the political and historical language which deals with populations, three small States. They stand near each other, out of the way of the rest of Europe, and are generally spoken of as a cluster, not extensive enough for two sovereignties, as they now are, but more appropriate to one. It is natural to slip from this into the supposition of an easy intercourse between the different units of the group. A little attention to comparative distances on the map undeceives us in this supposition; still more effectually and somewhat harshly it is dispersed by experience in Scandinavian travelling. If you meet a German of the Baltic, or a Dane, or an inhabitant of the south of Sweden, who has been a traveller for pleasure, you will find that he has not sought it in Norway, but probably in Scotland, Switzerland, or the Tyrol. The Norwegian scenery is twice as far from his door; and if it were only just as far geographically, it would be three times as long a journey in the consumption of time. In fact, our opportunities for such a visit are better in this country. But still for us the journey is no trifle. The easiest way to accomplish it is by sea, but to some this will open grave considerations. We saw the other day a friend fresh returned from the Fiords who said that his voyage to and from his selected touring-ground cost him ten days of "pitch and toss." Being a cynic, with a peculiarly constituted stomach, his griefs were not of the usual kind associated in many a sad memory with rough sea passages. It took a shape mixed in some measure with indignant wrath towards those who, conscious of

their infirmities, make a long voyage loathsome to those who say with Campbell, "Hail to thy face and odours, glorious sea," and can even enjoy—

"Old ocean's saturnalian days,
And roaring nights of revelry and sport."

Our friend's ten days' experience of the frailty of his brother men had embittered and distorted his notions of the social duties. He maintained that under its influence they lost all sense of decency and of integrity so far as concerned an estimate of the amount to which you are entitled to throw your burden on your neighbours. "We provide hospitals for those who are the inevitable victims of disease and accident when they cannot afford to pay for proper treatment; but what right have people to go to sea and bring all the horrors of the hospital under the eyes and nose of those who have gone down into the sea in ships with the view of thoroughly enjoying themselves? If nothing else could abate the nuisance, let it be enacted and posted up in each steamer that all who give way to such spiteful frailties shall be thrown overboard." Without concurring in measures of so rigorous a character, we can readily feel that he who goes to sea for pleasure is entitled to grumble at the Mazentian sort of companionship he is bound to endure, and that his sufferings should obtain a little more sympathy than they receive from those who have been the cause of it. In fact, to them the misery of the voyage is not so great as it appears. They are in a sort of trance of half-somnolent stupor, unconscious of misery as endured in themselves or as inflicted on others. Your infirm sea-goers should look to this, and remember that they ought not so much to deem themselves objects of

compassion, as to suffer remorse of conscience for the grievous injuries inflicted by them on innocent pleasure-seekers.

But how is the person so afflicted and afflicting to get to Norway? Well, the case is hard, and deserves consideration. No doubt there are ways of abbreviating the sea voyage, but if we do this to the utmost, a journey to the scenery of Norway will be rather longer than to Turkey. You cross the Channel at Dover or Folkestone, then the railways carry you round by Hanover and Hamburg to Altona, where there is a trifling water run to Kosore in Zealand, and another still shorter passes you on from Elsinore to Helsingfors, and so you are in the peninsula wherein you intend to enjoy yourself. But when you are here in Sweden, and even if you should go onward and get on Norwegian ground, it may be necessary to make up a fitted account between space and time, the end of which may be a balance against time so heavy that if it is to be liquidated in the scenery of glaciers and snowy mountains, it will be a better investment to turn to the right and gain Switzerland or the Tyrol, than to press northwards. I fear the necessary conclusion from these casual hints is that the Norwegian tour for those who must take it economically involves a considerable sea voyage, and is consequently to be accomplished only by those who take kindly to the sea, or that other and less estimable class already referred to, who, having made up their minds to endure a certain amount of personal affliction, have no hesitation in dooming their fellow-travellers to afflictions of a more appalling character. For reasons to be presently stated let us take Bergen as a point to be reached, and see how it is done under present arrangements, and how it might be done. A not

unusual plan is to sail in the first place for Hamburg. That town is now the gate to many eminent parts of the Continent—the Hartz, Saxony and the scenery of the Upper Elbe, Silesia, Bohemia, Bavaria, and the Tyrol. Hence the opportunities of going anywhere by Hamburg are frequent, and Hamburg is close to Denmark, and Denmark is close to Sweden and Norway. But Hamburg is about twice as far from Bergen as the nearest point on the British coast is, and though there is frequent communication between this country and Hamburg, it does not follow that you will get right on from that port to your final destination: on the contrary, you will probably discover that you may wait long ere you find, or perhaps may never find, a vessel sailing from Hamburg to Bergen direct, and that your chance of getting there within a couple of weeks or so will depend on the success of your calculations about the available means of, in the first place, reaching Copenhagen, or Stockholm, or Gottenburg, or Christiania, or Christiansand, in one or other of which places you must abide until certain arrangements about which you have not been consulted give you an opportunity of getting either to Bergen itself, or to some place nearer it on the map, but possibly more distant from it if we make a junction of time and place, and include delay in the calculation.

There are vessels to Christiania and Christiansand, both in Norway; but landing at either you are still a long way from Bergen. Christiansand being in the absolute south of Norway is the nearer point to Bergen by sea. But the coasting steamer between the two places has many incidental duties to perform on the way; and it would be easy to sail a vessel from some port in Scotland right into Bergen harbour in much less time than it takes to per-

form the usual voyage between Christiansand and Bergen.

At Bergen I found great reliance on a packet, plying between that port and Hull, touching at Christiansand. It had the advantage over such vessels as dropped you at Christiansand and left you there, that you could get on to your destination without waiting through some indefinite time for a native vessel going in the same direction. But the map will at once show that this is a long sea voyage when compared to other sea courses between Britain and Norway. Measure the distance between the north-east shoulder of the coast of Scotland and Bergen—you will find that it is little more than half the distance between Hull and Bergen, while this latter is of course increased in the actual voyage by the divergence to Christiansand. In short, for reasons, as I have said, to be afterwards laid down, the direct sail across the North Sea from Scotland to Bergen, is the way to reach the characteristic scenery of Norway with the smallest amount of sea travelling. Farther, if we desire in a straight line the shortest passage between Great Britain and Norway, this is it. The old Norsemen knew that well when they swarmed over and peopled the eastern coast of Scotland.

This shortest way to Norway, however, is the property of but one part of the empire—that which projects furthest in the direction of north-east. The inhabitants of South Britain, if it were open to them, would have a certain amount of inland travelling in England and Scotland, to enter against the present amount of inland or other travelling necessary to be undertaken on the other side of the Channel under the present arrangements. But when we come to fix the account, the balance is largely in

favour of taking at home the land journey that must be taken either at home or abroad. In the first place, it comes easier to us in calculation of time and many other items to reach a port in Britain, and then take ship, than to work our way through the Continental arrangements for land travelling. Then the whole inland journey, if taken on this side, can be accomplished by train, while there is no getting to Bergen without posting, estimated in hundreds of British miles according to the point where the traveller leaves steam behind him.

All this, of course, presupposes the possession of what we have not—direct steam communication between the north of Scotland and Bergen. Towards the establishment of a steam navigation route, there are many considerations besides the mere breadth of water to be crossed.

Trade, in fact, is almost the supreme criterion in our steamship intercourse with Northern Europe. If it be not yet quite clear, I hope further topographical explanations will make it so—that the best way to abbreviate the sea passage to the focus of the Norwegian scenery is by a passage from Scotland to Bergen. Fraserburgh or Peterhead would be, of course, the absolutely nearest ports of departure; but if we pass Aberdeen and Dundee, and fall back on Edinburgh, which already has a large trade with Norway, we yet cut more than two hundred miles off the distance between Hull and Bergen. Still, as I say, the tourist will only get this as a boon from the trader, who will decide whether a trade between the Firth of Forth and the capital of the central districts of Norway will be remunerative. That the present line of trade should be by Christiansand and Christiania, is because these ports are on the line

of traffic between the far north and the ports of Denmark and Germany. Bergen is in reality, distant as it is, the richest and most commercial city in Norway. A great part of the business transacted by the northern towns of Norway is supplied to them from Bergen. I found there the representative of a great English ship-building house making arrangements to supply the community with steam-vessels for the passage to America; and one would naturally think that when trade can perform such a feat as this, it would find the direct trade with the Firth of Forth lucrative.

Steam has done everything in endowing us with the riches of this new-found pleasure-land. We feel this more fully after we have set foot on the shore of Gamle Norge than when we are struggling to get there. We might more certainly count on getting there without its aid than on wending our way into the recesses of the scenery. To one only fortunate being—the yachter—are these treasures open without the aid of steam; and to him—always supposing that he has in some measure satisfactorily settled the question how he and his yacht are to be transferred to the eastern shore of the North Sea—once inside the gates of the Fiord, he has such resources in long stretches of sheltered water wending through ever-varying but ever-divine scenery, as it is certain no other part of Europe accessible by sea can afford to him.

But the commonplace wanderer who pays his fare has his harvest of beauty and rarity too, if he knows how to reap it. And here is the lesson that he has to take in, namely, that he is to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the geographical distribution of the country he is in, and the relation to this geographical distribution of the various arrivals and departures of public conveyances, and especially of steam-ves-

sels. If he do not condescend to do this, he may find himself waiting a week or a fortnight in some desolate seaport, while a little attention might have afforded him the bestowal of these days on the glittering waters and under the beautiful cliffs of the Fiord. The traveller is himself entirely to blame if he wastes his opportunities by such blunders; for, in justice to the Norwegians, it can be said that they have done everything reasonable to help him. Every week in summer there appears the "*Norges Kommunikationer eller Reiseblad*,"—a general time-table of all public means of travelling by water and by land. It is printed in Christiania, but it is seen everywhere. It may be bought for something in the neighbourhood of a penny; but the value of such a possession in some remote station, where it is a question whether one is to get home in a week or in a month, is hardly to be estimated in cash.

Though issued, as I have said, weekly, its information generally extends far beyond the week of issue. We have not only the times of the departure of vessels for Hull, Leith, Hamburg, Denmark, and other places foreign to Norway, but the times when the steamers touch at all the countless landing-stations on the long stretches of the Fiord. And these steamers in the Fiord are of themselves a new and invaluable gift to the wanderer. It used to be said, in a general way, that the vessels making the periodical long coasting voyages between Christiania and Hammerfest ran up all the inlets, and afforded an excellent opportunity of seeing the interior of the country. Where creeks or bays a few miles long led up to towns or inhabited districts, then the vessels put in on the way of their traffic. But how long time any vessel would take to sail from the south to the

north end of Norway, running up each successive sea-arm and never crossing any, may be imagined but not calculated, when it is said that the Sogne Fiord alone would occupy a week.

From the invaluable Reiseblad, and from district maps, the stranger will discover how far his available leisure will enable him to thread all the intricate windings of the Sogne and its neighbour the Hardanger. He will weigh with himself in joint estimates of his tastes and his disposable time how far he is to stake his fate in the vessel he may be in for the time, and how far he will take his chance of enjoyment at any of its many stations, or go ashore and remain for its successor. In short, his resources are abundant and all pleasant. Perhaps he may find some difficulty in mastering the technicalities of the Reiseblad, but not of a formidable kind, if he sets his face to it doggedly, as Johnson says. The good-natured Norwegians have done everything they can for him, since, indeed, they have supplied him with a glossary of terms—and a very sensible glossary it is, as this extract at the beginning, in which the English meanings are printed in italics, will show: *Af, of; Afgang, departure; Afgangstider, hours of departure; Afgangsdagene, days of departure; Afstand, distance.*

That he may do full justice to the Reiseblad and to himself, the tourist should secure local maps according to the districts to be distinguished by his presence. The usual British geographical maps of the whole Scandinavian peninsula are as useless to him as a map of Europe. The best of them will perhaps comprise the whole of the scenery district in a corner four inches square. The basin of each of the larger Fiords, given in sufficient detail for practical purposes, will cover as large a map as one can

conveniently handle in the open air. It would strengthen the intending tourist's hands if such maps could be obtained in this country, that he may see his work before him. Such aids, and an English translation of the Reiseblad, are among the possible additions to the already highly-favoured lot of the wanderer in Norway.

So much for the means of independent action. But there is another alternative of a totally different character open to him. He can put himself under tutelage or direction, and leave the responsibility of laying out the whole scheme of his labours and his enjoyments to a master-spirit. Almost every visitor to Norway buys Bennett's Handbook: it has the advantage over those made up at home, that it is refreshed year by year with information on the spot. In its first page we are told as one of the blessings of Christiania, that "Mr. Bennett is generally on board as soon as the English steamers arrive at the quay, or as soon as the custom-house officer comes, and, if requested, will convey to his own house the luggage of those who wish to be fitted out by him with carioles; and in case there is anything subject to duty, he will clear it through the custom-house." Hence, as one duly warned, I have been careful to avoid placing my first step in Norwegian ground at Christiania, for in vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird. But there may be others who take a different view of such matters; and it is but fair that they should be made aware of the existence and functions of the great Bennett. I admit, too, that, but for the risk, I might have endeavoured to get a sight of that master of the art of guideship—one to whom those who haunt the Oberland or Killarney are but as common rank and file in comparison with a Napoleon or a Wellington. This

organisation of all the offices that minister to the wants and weaknesses of the tourist—connecting guides, drivers, and valets with a sort of hierarchy, or army under a general—is one of the sublime ideas conceived from time to time by the great minds of the world. It is likely that to many he has proved the guide, philosopher, and friend; and if he has also been their master, owner, and driver, it were pity to disturb them, good souls, unconscious in their happy slavery.

Lest any member of the tourist flock should be a desolate wanderer, unable to find his Nestor and guide, there is at the end of the Guide-Book to Norway a small map or ground-plan, showing on a conspicuous street on the one hand "the way to the palace," on the other "Bennett's house,"—thus providing against the confusion with one another of two distinguished establishments. Like all really great rulers, one sees that Bennett supports his power by a policy, and appears to act not so much by the dictates of his own will as by the pressure of circumstances. His is a constitutional government, and one important clause in the charter of its constitution is very neatly and clearly explained in the following terms:—

"The Tourist's Club ought to be supported by every traveller in Norway. The subscription is one dollar a-year for an annual subscriber, or ten dollars for a life subscriber. This sum entitles the donor to receive a copy of an interesting book published every year, and accounting for the outlay of the money, &c. Mr. Bennett keeps a book, in which any one may enter his name as a subscriber, and he will undertake to forward the annual publication through the book-post. The subscriptions are laid out in facilitating tourists to see waterfalls, &c., which would otherwise be inaccessible. Mr. Bennett attends the annual meeting himself, and will be happy on such

occasions to make proposals that any member may suggest for the comfort and convenience of tourists. Members of the Club can buy at Mr. Bennett's, for 20 skillings Norw., a badge with which they can prove to the peasants at the huts, and other places supported by the Tourist Club, that they are members of the same, which will secure them civility and a preference to the beds."—*Handbook*, p. 2.

Thus we see that Bennett, like other sovereigns, has established an order of chivalry, with an appropriate decoration and important civil privileges.

Bennett is, on the whole, evidently a magnanimous despot, showing himself so in the many shapes in which he offers to the British tourist the means of helping himself. He seems to say, If you can get on without me, do so by all means, and here is no end of guiding literature to help you. An important element in this literature is a "selection of phrases for tourists traveling in Norway, by T. Bennett." In this he shows a marvellous sagacity in anticipating the natural tastes and desires of his countrymen; and if there is any influence that would induce them to learn a little Norsk, he has certainly found it in the attractive utterances which he endeavours to teach them; as, for instance, "What can I have to drink?" "Have you any beer?" "Bring another bottle of beer?" "Bring me a glass of brandy?" "Let me have a glass of hot brandy-and-water." "Have you any English porter?" "Have you any claret? Any champagne? Any hock?" "Let me have a bottle of gin." Nor are other wants of the Christian gentleman neglected, though whether they are of so urgent a character may be doubted. "Where is the church?" "How far off is the church?" "What time does the service begin?" "Where is the clergyman's house?"

Bennett has not overlooked the means of expressing the national impatience. If you want to say, "Be quick," "Vær snar" is put at your disposal. For "look alive," you have the choice of "skynd dig" and "vær lidt snart." In this class of suggestions we do not find that British national oath which has resounded over Europe from the days of Joan of Arc downwards, and this we must hold as a serious omission. On the other hand, resources are supplied to meet desperate emergencies; as, for instance, "Have you anything to bale out the boat with?" Thus, if you find the vessel filling with water, and rapidly sinking, you have the consolatory consciousness that somewhere in your luggage there is a mentor in print, and somewhere in its pages there is a resource for the occasion, and it is in these words: "Har de noget at oese Baaden lens." But the benevolence of the mentor does not stop here. These words are spelt in the Danish or Norse fashion; but for the relief of the agonised Englishman, he has them as they would be spelt if they were English words: "Hahr de nohg-utt ahtt oesa Bohd-unnn lenns." This must render the making of the critical inquiry easy to the species of intellect known in the tutorial world as "the meanest capacity."

And this introduces us to the great Bennett in a new character—as a philosopher of the phonetic school. Now to pronounce it, so as to be intelligible to the natives, is the great difficulty with all who have acquired a knowledge of a language through grammars, dictionaries, and the reading of books. There is one extremely valuable rule for a British traveller in all the countries where the base of the language is like his own Teutonic. When he meets with a word that has evidently a common origin with

some home words, although it is differently spelt, let him not attempt to pronounce it from its spelling—he is much more likely to be understood if he use the corresponding home word. It is the ambition of Bennett, however, to supersede this clumsy alternative, and to give you the means of uttering the most difficult sentence exactly as it would be uttered by the native Norsemen. An instance or two will show the debt of gratitude which he has laid upon the tourist by this service. The great first question, "What can I have to eat?" is in the written language "Hvad kan jeg faa at spise," but as pronounced, "Vah kahnn yei foh ahtt speeså?" So also, "I should like a roast chicken to breakfast," "Kan jeg faa en stegt Kylling til Frokost," is phonetised into "Kahnn yei foh en stehgt k'y-lig till Frohkost." "Can I have roast mutton?" "Kan jeg faa Faaresteg," phonetised, "Kahnn yei foh Fohr-a-stehg." Perhaps, when the intending British tourist has made himself acquainted with the facilities for easy and comfortable travel thus set before him, it may be yet an additional comfort to know that his own native English will carry him over a great part of Norway. He owes this to the energy of the Bennetts, and others of his countrymen, and to the natural clewerness and civility of the natives. If he choose his directions after sufficient inquiry he may see many places, and converse with many people, without speaking or listening to any language but his own. It is not merely that those who have to deal with travellers learn a roadside English for travellers' purposes, like the waiters of the hotels in Switzerland, and thence down the Rhine. Through Norway, there is a far-spread knowledge, not only of the English language, but of our institutions and

our literature. The engineer of one of the Fiord steamers—the station-master who sees that you get your cariole—men of that class will take advantage of their opportunity, and ply the British tourist sometimes very closely for knowledge in return for what they impart. And when he returns home and narrates his travels and adventures in the commercial room, there is no necessity for that traveller, in retailing his colloquies with “the natives,” revealing the language in which it has been held, nor need he explain how incompetent he found himself to improve the knowledge of these natives on the masterpieces of English literature.

But there is another opening for him who, having no language but his own, desires to penetrate into distant wilds, where he will utter that language in vain. Let him provide himself with a *Tolk*—that is, an interpreter. Such a possession adds a new and potent element to the dignity of the *Storr Engländer*. It announces not only that he does not condescend to know the language of the people he is travelling among, but also that he can pay well for such a distinction. He thoroughly enjoys the consciousness of his own greatness, being something like that of a Lord Chancellor or a Secretary of State, whose high official position makes it becoming and necessary that he should be attended by a Private Secretary. The great Bennett may be trusted to procure a *Tolk* to order and specification—solemn and pompous, or chatty and lively, as may suit his master's turn of mind.

And now, before parting with the unseen friend, let me say a word in justice to a certain vein of good sense and good feeling running through the literary counsel addressed to those who do not partake in the felicity of his personal

attentions. “The object,” he says, “of the day-book at the station is to complain of extortions, or other misconduct; but so many foolish remarks are made by some English travellers that the authorities seldom pay attention to anything written in English on that account; it is therefore very advisable that this should be discontinued.” And further, “travellers should bear in mind that the obligation upon the peasants to post is a tax upon them, and that, so far from their conferring a favour upon the peasants by hiring the horses, the latter would be much better pleased if there was no travelling on their road.” How it is that in a country where the people take and enjoy freedom of action, this yoke should have been secured upon the peasantry near the high-roads, is a mystery. But it is surely adding insult to injury when the traveller, who is so entitled to take what the peasant has, may, at the same time, utter haughty taunts because his poor possessions are not on the scale of the posting establishments that were on the old English roads. And hence is a very just comment by our author: “At the ‘fast’ stations a certain number of horses are obliged to be kept; but during certain parts of the year, when horses are much in demand, it is often the case that, instead of a complaint being written against the station-master if the posting is not quite as may be wished, an appeal should be made to the authorities to increase the recompense of the station-master in order that he may be enabled to keep more horses.”

Perhaps the reader is becoming tired of all this fuss of anticipation and preparation, and would rather hear what I have to tell of Norway itself in addition to what he may have learned otherwise. He will ask why I speak of one peculiar

corner as containing "the scenery," when according to the usual authorities, Norway is entirely composed of scenery. Open the guide-book any where and read what you find. Mark the place on the map and turn up some other a thousand miles distant from it, the one description is the echo of the other. Magnificent prospect of hill and valley — grand cascade — splendid mountain stream — abrupt rocky pass — rugged ascent, and so on. Yet this is all truth in its way. It would be difficult, perhaps, to alight on any spot in Norway where there is not scenery. I never had an opportunity at least of doing so. It is a mountainous and forest-clad country, and where these features are there will be scenery. Any part of it is therefore a pleasant contrast to the dreary sandy flats of Northern Germany, which from the other side of the Baltic stretch onwards to the slopes of the Carpathians and the heights of the Upper Elbe. If you take a day or two at any of the small towns along the coast—as Christiansand and Stavanger—you have as much of rock, hill, and forest in your daily walks as can be crowded together. In an hour's saunter from your comfortable inn, you may come unprepared on a cataract that would be famous in all the guide-books if it belonged to Scotland, and would wash away the Isle of Wight with all its chimes if it could be made to pour itself forth there. The scenery in the run along the coast after we get into the string of islands, is full of variety and pleasant interest. It has a strong resemblance to that of the voyage along the west of Scotland between the Hebrides and the mainland, It is perhaps scarcely so grand, not owning any conspicuous peaked tops like Cruachan and Ben Nevis, for the coast hills of Scandinavia are all bluffs of a pretty uni-

form shape and height. One pleasant feature of the landscape on either side of the Norwegian coast, is not seen from our own, the light-green patches on the brown hills, where the Norse farmers nestle, either in single families or small communities. Their wooden houses are mere dots on the face of the hill, but the pasture surrounding them is of the most exquisite green that the eye ever enjoyed; and it is the peculiar virtue of this colour that, instead of fatiguing or dazzling the eye with splendour, the stronger it is, and the brighter the light in which it is thrown, the more gratefully does the eye rest on it. Though these nests are seen by looking upwards and over the tops of steep rocks, they are not so far above the level of the sea as many of our moorland sheep-farms. It is easy to see that they are thoroughly sheltered, and one can imagine any amount of rural comfort and felicity in the possession of their inhabitants. These green spots, and some eccentricities in the formation of the rocks, are the chief matters of interest in the coasting voyage within the islands or skerries, and in truth the pleasures of the voyage are apt to be exaggerated by those who have come into its shelter after suffering the disquietudes of the open sea.

Here we have a line of coast running through fourteen degrees of latitude, and, with its sinuosities, making a voyage of more than two thousand miles. There is no general "tableau," as the French say, to be expected of such a country. One man has perforated a hundred miles or so from one town or station—some one else from another, and except what may be due to variations in the animal spirits or the literary capacity of the writers, there is little variety in the account they have to offer. Before the days of steam navigation there was scarcely

a notion of national unity in the various districts of Norway—the adventurous wanderer who went ashore and tried to see something of the land, knew only that he was somewhere on the shore of the North Sea. It was a sea of many perils and abounding in marvellous monsters, among them the great sea-serpent as we see him depicted in the books of Pontoppidan and Olaus Magnus.

In the days of our Charles II., Moses Pitt, an author and publisher, better known for his calamities than his achievements, projected "The English Atlas." It was to be historical as well as geographical, according to the practice of the age, and was to excel in magnitude and fulness of information the great Atlas of the Blaeuws of Amsterdam. It stopped at the end of the fourth volume, and no other effort has since been made in this country to create a geographical work on so large a scale. It began at the north pole, creeping over the Continent, and, unfortunately, had not reached the British Islands when literary death overtook it. Thus it is monopolised by Russia, the Polar districts, Scandinavia, and Germany. It describes each district at great length, and Norway is conspicuous only by the little that can be said on so imperfectly known a land. It tells us that "the long ridge of high mountains which divide this kingdom from Sweden are continually covered with snow, whence intolerable sharp winds are sent down into the valleys beneath, which by this means become desolate and unfruitful. But more southerly, and all along the western coast, the air is much more temperate, and would be healthful enough if not corrupted by the putrefaction and stench of a certain kind of rats, called by the inhabitants *lemmer*, which infect the whole country

with the epidemical disease of the jaundice and a giddiness of the head, which is most especially apt to seize on strangers unacquainted with the danger and uninsured against the distemper."

I never heard of this form of epidemic, nor of the "*lemmer*," whose unburied dead are the cause of it. There is much grumbling, especially by sportsmen, about pestilent insects swarming and stinging in the summer evenings. But this is a plague peculiar to the far north, where the mere holiday rambler is not likely to be. Those who take that long stretch do not go for scenery, for that of the midland districts is much finer, but for sport, or the benefit of crossing the Arctic circle, contemplating the midnight sun, and moralising, like Carlyle's *Teufelsdröckh*, "when behind him lies all Europe and Asia fast asleep except the watchers."

How little was known until very recent times of the availability of Norway to the pleasure-seeker will be known by a small volume of travel very popular forty years ago. It appeared in Constable's '*Miscellany*,' with the title, "Narrative of a Tour through Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, by Derwent Conway, author of *Solitary Walks in Many Lands*." Derwent Conway was Henry David Inglis, an author creditably reputed as uniting accuracy to liveliness and picturesqueness of description. Far the greater part of his narrative refers to Norway, where he sometimes lived with personal friends, and sometimes wandered as the humour led him. He had thus abundant opportunities of seeing both the people and their country, and he made good use of these opportunities. His book is eloquent of torrents and cataracts, remote solitary lakes, gloomy haunted forests, and rugged rocky clefts. He invades the territory of the wolf

and the bear, and dwells on the influence of the mighty solitudes through which he wanders day after day. It was a refreshing book, telling of new ground to those who were getting tired of the long-trodden circles of the European tourist. It was indeed the one book that did more than any other to direct the eyes of the pleasure-idler towards Norway. Yet it is plainly to be seen, in reading his book, that he had not come within two hundred miles of the characteristic scenery of Norway—characteristic in this, that it is to be found in Norway and nowhere else. It has doubtless happened so with many others as with Inglis. They have wandered about in fine wild scenery, unconscious that beyond it lies other scenery as much above it in excellence as the Trossachs are above Habbie's Howe.

I now propose that we shall find our way geographically to the regions of that scenery, by beginning, like teacher and schoolboy, with certain primary truths. The distribution of the railway system is now one of our guides to physical geography. We see the lines passing up the valley of the Alps, but the whole railway system of Europe is put to a dead stop by the clump of stumpy hillocks called the Harz Mountains. They are not perforated by long flat valleys like the Alps, and in some measure our own Highlands, but stand as so many separate knobs interrupting the broad level of Northern Europe. Their mineral riches would naturally purchase abundant railway traffic, but the engineering difficulties are inexorable. Norway partakes of the same character on a larger scale. The country is naturally enterprising. The great roads are wonderful triumphs of engineering, and railway enterprise has done what it can. There is a line from Christiania to the long lake of Mjøsen;

and thus, between train and inland navigation, we are set down as far northward as Lilliehammer. Then, again, a few miles of flat ground being available at Trondheim, the railway system has shown its earnest desire to do whatever it can, by seizing the opportunity and laying down a distant isolated line. From the Naes and Christiansand, at the southern extremity, to the Arctic Ocean, the country is one rough cake of solid rock, notched and broken here and there. It is the primitive granite and the neighbouring gneiss, which this granite has the credit, when in its hot and fierce state, of having roasted into its existing crystalline condition. While this roasting was in progress it was no doubt accompanied by a mighty amount of spluttering, seething, and roaring, especially in affairs between the molten masses and the North Sea. The result was to leave a roughened surface, knobs sticking up, and clefts between them, where perhaps at some time there had been an outburst of heated air under the molten stone. Then afterwards, when all was hard and cold, came the other influences, frost with its icebergs and glaciers, water with its raging torrents, all cutting and deepening those marks that now give the country its awful beauty. But it is not a territory of wide glens, or straths as we call them. The Alps supply the great streams that, in the channels of the Rhine, the Rhone, and the Danube, float downwards to the German Ocean, the Mediterranean, and the Black Sea. All these streams—the Inn, the Iser, the Salz, the Arve, and many others—wind through flat and fruitful valleys, passing in long stretches through the mountains. From the upper range of these valleys the snowy Alps are seen towering aloft. Were it not for the valleys deep down within them,

the snowy summits would not be pitched so far above the eye, and the scenery would not be what it is. We are not to expect this class of scenery in Norway. The valleys are not deep and broad, like those of the Alps, and the mountains themselves are but half the height of those in the central range of Europe. We must therefore expect nothing in Norway like the scenery of Chamouni and Meyringen, though it is an open question whether we may not see something finer even than these renowned regions can afford.

If you look at any common map of Norway you will see how deeply the Fiords or branches of the sea cut into the land. Here, at distances of from a hundred to a hundred and fifty miles, is the solid cake of rock cut through, and that solid cake, from about two thousand feet in height near the open sea, thickens inland until it reaches from six to eight thousand feet. Here there is abundant available material for scenery on a great scale. The waters let loose from the heaped-up snows of the long winters do their part, along with the rocks and clefts, to complete the glories of the scenery. Instead of escaping through long rivulets down to some stream which sends its accumulating waters through valley after valley into a great river, the waters toss themselves right over the ridges of rock into the bosom of the fiord. Hence the country is alive with cataracts of all forms and sizes. Everybody knows that wonder of Switzerland, the beautiful Staubbach. Norway has no such background to such a picture as the Jungfrau, with her far-stretching snows and sharp peaks. But Norway is full of Staubbachs, many of them on a scale to which the celebrated specimen would be a trifle. The effects of rock and tree and

water under such conditions are susceptible of an infinite and beautiful variety; and the whole enjoyment of the scene is enriched by the long summer twilight, with its warmth and its brilliant colours.

Take, for instance, a scene that may open on you any fine afternoon on the Fiord itself, or the roads that twist themselves in curves and zig-zags down to the edge of the water. From the ridge right overhead, some three thousand feet or so, a stream large enough to be counted a river among us is pitched into the air. Away it goes in great clouds of spray and water dust. Perhaps at some break in the precipice the drenching showers thus thrown abroad concentrate, and the wandering mists are again a stream. It may cast itself abroad, and re-form itself over and over, or it may take but a single leap, pelting the rocks below with an eternal patter, as of a thunder-shower. When you see the thin white thread far up in the cleft of the black rock, you are sensible of the height of the wall that by distance diminishes the heap of waters that, in some shape or other, descend to the level where you stand. All over the rocks, wherever there is standing-room for them, trees burst forth—tall, solemn pine-trees near the ground, dwindling as they ascend to something of the semblance of hothouse plants. And now suppose that on all this scene—the black rocks, the water, and the verdure—a bright sunshine is pouring its light, and tinging the mass of wet with all the colours of the rainbow. It is a sight, if seen but once, ever to be remembered; and it may often be seen upon the Fiords. There are no common rainbow effects—no sunsets, no meteors—that will compare with the hillside thus all aglow with ever-shifting colours.

Let us endeavour to estimate the

scenery of the Fiords by comparison with some of the most renowned specimens of inland water scenery in the old established sight-seeing districts. I take, in the first place, the Königsee, in a corner of Bavaria, near the pleasant village of Berchtesgaden. I suppose it is the most "romantic" of all inland lakes in the old world, by reason of the height of its banks. I remember when I spoke of it some years ago in your pages, a valued correspondent of yours charged me with injustice to it in the matter of the perpendicularity of its precipices. I had questioned if they rose five thousand feet right up without break, and your friend said they did. The dispute, at all events, predicated considerable magnitude of scenery. I am not prepared to say that any one scene I have witnessed from the Fiord exceeds the effect from the middle of the Bavarian lake. But then this is to all practical purposes a spectacle only, not a continued enjoyment. You cannot wander about the banks of the lake. It is inaccessible save at the one point where its showmen and showwomen keep their boats. They row you out to the point of view, and they row you back. You have seen the exhibition, and you have paid your money, and it is all over. But once on the Fiord, you may sail hundreds of miles in and out of the long stretching branches, or you may land anywhere and enjoy everything that can be afforded to you by such scenery. If you are tired of the steamer and its company, nothing is easier than to take up your tabernacle at any station and paddle about, running up here and there into the narrow creeks, or climbing up among the cataracts.

The scenery of the Fiords has been compared to that of the Lake of Lucerne. Some parts of the scenery of the Fiords do strikingly

remind one of "the sacred lake far off among the hills," especially in the narrow inlets shaded by the spurs of Pilatus. But altogether the Fiords are on a grander scale; and if they have features in common with those of Lucerne, the parallel comes of the infinite variety of remarkable scenery lining the long stretches of the Fiords. I won't admit to an equality with it the lake scenery of the Salz Rammer Gut, pleasant as its memory is from an association with Longfellow's 'Hyperion.' That broad, flat precipice, whence a jolly Englishman demanded the echoes abusive of St. Wolfgang, is good by itself; but there are many finer on the Fiords. As to lakes Leman and Lausanne, their adornments are of a different character; while Yverdun, Neuchatel, and the other waters lying in the hollows between the Alps and the Jura, belong to scenery of far inferior class and rank. The Fiords have more points in common, indeed, with river scenery met on the notorious Rhine, than with any other lakes: there is somewhat of the same narrowness between the banks; but the banks are several times as high as the spurs of the seven mountains. Then the slopes are fresh and rich and green, instead of presenting us with dust, and gravel, and scrubby vines; and the waters are as pure as water can be, instead of a dilution of light grey mud, like the unwashed Rhine. Lastly, this scenery must not be levelled to the dry sandstone walls of the Saxon Switzerland. It stands alone, indeed, and in nothing is it more admirable than in the continued shifting of its character, utterly defying the visitor to decide which of its many restless moods is the most secure in his esteem and admiration.

And don't, along of these laudations of the rich feast prepared for

the eye, take fright in the suspicion that other and more material food is lacking. Stories there are about well-fed John Bulls rejoicing in the fortune that, after long abstinence, sends them some *flad brod and milk*. In Norway there is now as much scenery as any heart need desire available, along with all the comforts of the "Saut Market." If any one encounters "spare fast that oft with Gods doth diet," it must be of his own special seeking. Here and there on the Fiords are small hostels where salmon and venison especially abound. Then the steamers are in themselves floating taverns, wherein travellers may fit themselves out for distant enterprises in uninhabited wilds. Starvation, indeed, is not one of the conspicuously visible elements of Norwegian life. The natives one meets on the tourist grounds are what the Irish call "moighty ayters," and they treat strangers on their own scale. I have seen the average capacity of the British appetite create among them much compassionate wonder. My last breakfast in Norway was taken alone at my own special order, and I was tempted to count the number of preparations of fish and flesh placed at my disposal on the occasion. They were in all fourteen.

As I have already noted, one special beatitude of this class of scenery is the freedom of motion within and around its centre. This has been much increased by the recent progress of steam. No doubt the Norwegian boats are more picturesque than those puffing, blustering monsters; but, at the same time, there is more freedom on the steamer's deck than in custody of a couple of rowers, and there is the abundant facility for leaving it and seeking solitude whether on the hills or on the waters. Passing between the head-waters of the

Fiords affords profuse opportunities for enjoying the scenery purely inland. Land, for instance, at Eide, on the Hardanger, and get on, on foot or otherwise, to Vossevangen, with its deep solemn glen, and its inland lake and river. When you are tired of what you find there, start for Indevangen, on the Sogne Fiord, with its mighty cataract, the Keel Fos. There again the friendly steamers are at your service, and you can spend your days on board or on shore as may suit your humour or your disposable time.

The amount of this kind of life at one's disposal shifts from time to time, but seems ever on the increase. Murray's guide-book published in 1870, treats the Hardanger and the Sogne Fiords as places to be seen only by hiring boats. They are now regularly frequented by steamers starting from Bergen. The head-waters can be reached by the high-road from Christiania; but in the present condition it is far more convenient to adjust your motions to those of the steamers. Perhaps next touring season may see the more northern Fiords open to steam, and then the wanderer can have his headquarters at Trondheim or Malmo. Meanwhile, there is the less distant Bergen at his disposal, and it is as well, perhaps, not to be too ambitious. One feature ever at hand and conspicuous in Norway is the British Tourist, weeping, and wailing, and gnashing his teeth, because he is due at home and cannot get thither at once. He has let himself step by degrees so far off, that a thousand miles lie between him and home; and to get through this distance, he is at the mercy of delays of steamers, calculated so as not to suit each other. Even in Bergen, if he write to his family, he will be fortunate if he get an answer to his letter in a couple of weeks. This is essentially

a country where the Persian proverb should guide you, and teach you to "fold the arms of resignation on the bosom of patience." One great boon is at your hand in Bergen and several other places—the electric telegraph. Its ample employment by the inhabitants themselves in their business transactions, is a testimony to their activity and enterprise.

Bergen itself is not exactly a garden of delight to the pleasure-seekers—in fact, it is unpopular among them. It is said to rain there about 360 days in the year, "more or less." The damp reception thus offered to the stranger is discouraging, and does not lead him to expect the divine sunshine that prevails a hundred miles inland. It is said that here the clouds crossing the Atlantic encounter the first high ground. They are consequently tapped, and pour out their contents in order that fine weather may be available for the scenery. Several local peculiarities attest the abundance of wet. You seem to have got into a community of black cowed friars; but you find that it is the custom-house officers, and others whose occupation is in the open air, protected from the wet by a Macintosh clothing, which covers the head with a great hood, and descends to the feet. Garden gates and timber railings have roofs over them to keep them from being rotted by the ceaseless souse.

But for all this, there is some interest in Bergen. Remote as it is from the centre of European life, it has established, and long maintained, a separate vitality of its own. Its houses are all of timber, and the characteristic point of such building material is shown by the ominous inscription, in large letters, of "Brand Telegram," intimating that there will be found telegraphic communication with the fire establishments. I have before me an engraving of

Bergen, in a book by Jonston of Amsterdam, called, "*Illustrium principumque septentrionalium Europæ Tabulæ*." These *Tabulæ* represent the towns as they were in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, or the first of the seventeenth. The Bergen there represented is unchanged, save that now there are villas round it, and of old there was a wall made of great beams of wood set upright. The Slot or castle, with its fine Roman tower, is naturally unchanged, and so are the churches. The harbour and the quays lie as they did. The wooden beams have left descendants exactly like themselves. Facing the water is a row of high-gabled warehouses, penetrated by deep, dark passages, endowed with a most ancient and fish-like smell, as if their contents had remained in them since the days of the Dutch engraver. Their wooden sides have been rebuilt many times, perhaps not even without change of form, the timbers, as they decayed, being replaced by fresh wood. There is not much to attract in Bergen, except for those to whom the observation of a new and peculiar people, and their various ways, is itself a matter of interest. There is a museum more curious than we would expect, especially in objects peculiar to the district. Among these there are preserved many specimens of the peculiar carved woodwork of the Scandinavian races. They are the relics of an art endowed with a strange wild restlessness figured in dragons, serpents, and monstrous animals intertwined in contest and struggle—a sort of nightmare school of art that yet has a strange fascination in it.

If there be not much danger of starvation on the Fiord, still less is there here. To give credit to his treatment by the mercenary dispenser of the comforts of an inn

where such credit is due, is a duty too often neglected by the traveller. He rails sufficiently when the hospitality he considers his right is not afforded, but neglects to record meritorious services. Thou shockheaded waiter at the Scandinavie, so pleasantly perched on the top of the hill, I have somewhat of a debt to discharge towards thee. Thy aspect and ways would hardly befit Lang's or the Tavistock. We, the group of British tourists assembled under the roof of the Scandinavie, did not always approve thy hilarious, careless manner, nor thy way of doing half-a-dozen things at once, and leaving more of them half done. Punctuality and tidiness were not among thy virtues. We liked not the cleaning of the drinking-glasses, nor the one plate and knife that was to serve all purposes. Yet was it my lot to find in thy nature the sterling gold, to which all such matters are but tinsel. It happened in this wise:—Having sailed in the Olaf Kyre from Bergen to Christiansand, I was prepared to land, with my luggage all collected and packed,

when the steward brought me a good suit of broadcloth, imputing the ownership thereof to me. At first I repudiated it, but recollection gradually dawned on the affair. They were clothing I had brought to be worn in the towered cities of other lands, and when I reached Norway they were laid aside and forgotten. The Olaf Kyre sailing at early dawn, I had got on board at night, and our shockheaded friend, finding my clothing, had brought it to the vessel, and left it there without troubling me. Thus came it to pass, from this instance of honesty and attention, that my sojourn in Scandinavia cost a few pounds less than it might have cost.

Good-bye, reader, for the present. Ere we meet again, your fate for the days of rejoicing will have been fixed. But if its destiny is to Scandinavia, and you have not yet stepped on board, perhaps you can endure a little more chat, which will be rather about the place itself and its people, than the ways of getting there.

A CENTURY OF GREAT POETS, FROM 1750 DOWNWARDS.

NO. VII.—LORD BYRON.

IN all the great competitions for fame there is much that reminds the reader of quaint John Bunyan's parable, which his hero sees set before him in visible symbol in the Interpreter's house, and which is meant to refer to something much more important than the reputation even of great poets. Passion and Patience are the names of the two children, one of whom has his fine things all at once, while the other consents to wait for them, and is seen serene and cheerful, in all the confidence of hope, while the poor little passionate soul has had and worn and spoiled his finery, and gnashes his teeth over the too rapid fulfilment of his rash wishes. Without any deliberate choice in the matter, which is a thing seldom awarded to mankind, this contrast is continually presented to us in the world. Seldom, perhaps, we may allow, is real excellence kept permanently in the background; its day comes sooner or later; the blessing pronounced upon those who endure to the end is as true in temporal matters as in spiritual; and he who can wait is sure one time or other of his meed, according, or at least in some sort of proportion, to his worth. But while this is the case, it is equally certain that to some no waiting, no suspense, is necessary. Of two men, between whom it would be impossible to discriminate which is the greatest, one will leap into sudden fame in the very morning of his career, while another toils on patiently to the lingering eve which finally rewards him, but only after long-drawn agonies of suspense, and weariness, and sickness of de-

ferred hope. Nor is there even such a superiority in the slow recompense over the swift one as to compensate the second of these two for his weary waiting. The sudden reward may be as lofty, as lasting, as great as the slow. "Unto this last" the penny is given, the very same penny which rewards the weary toil of him who has borne the heat and burden of the day. These are discrepancies of nature which the wisest can neither account for nor explain. It is so; and if few of us can say that we have less than our deserts, it is certain that many not more deserving get more than we do—get it sooner, easier, and with *gaieté de cœur*—while we rise up early and lie down late, and eat the bread of sorrow. Neither nature nor religion affords any explanation of this. We know that the fact is so—and that is all we know.

There is no better example of this than that afforded by the career of Byron. Of all the poets of his time, it was he who commanded the most instant popularity, who had the greatest immediate effect upon his age, and whose position as a power among men was most remarkable. Scott was the only man of his time who equalled his wonderful success; but even Scott's influence, though broader and deeper, was not so intense and individual. He was like a broad, and full, and quiet stream, enriching and ennobling without agitating the wide country through which it flowed; but Byron was like a torrent, sweeping everything before him, waking and rousing all the echoes, so that nobody could ignore him, and even

the quietest nook could scarcely escape some thrill of the din and tumult he occasioned. While only a few enthusiasts knew and believed in Wordsworth and Coleridge, whom no one now will assert to be inferior to their noble rival, everybody had heard of, and half the world admired and adored, the daring young minstrel who had taken it by storm. And before these poets had done more than begin the first difficult steps of their progress up the steep hillside of Fame, he had reached the summit, and was making the air resound with his voice—a voice sometimes fine and musical as Apollo's lute, but sometimes noisy and coarse as any brazen trumpet. It may even be said, in some degree, that earth still resounds with that far-echoing voice; for among all Continental nations we believe that the English poet best known after Shakespeare is Byron. This curious fact must have been very perplexing to those of his contemporaries who were qualified to judge what was his true position in comparison with the other living competitors for fame whom he so significantly distanced in the race. To us the balance has been set even by those slow agencies of Time which work so surely, if so leisurely; but the wonder, though less bewildering, is not less interesting at a distance than near at hand—especially as in this case there seems to us a sufficient explanation for it, with which the mind can make itself reasonably content.

The position occupied by Art of all kinds—and especially by the art of poetry—in the world, is a peculiar one. It has no common test of use or daily necessity to which all men can put it alike. Though we are strenuously of opinion that the common heart and mind of mankind is the final judge, and that no poet can be great who does not in

the long-run win, to some sufficient degree, that universal franchise; yet we are obliged to allow that, in the first place, Poetry cannot be justly judged by the multitude. Religion, if the simile may be permitted to us, is universal and for the world; yet religion is for the religious, for the devout, for those who can understand its spirit and obey its laws; although, at the same time, for all mankind. In the same way Poetry addresses itself to the poetically-minded, though it claims an empire wherever intellect or feeling exists even in infinitesimal portions. The poet is understood, not, at the first hearing, by all minds, but by all poetical minds; and through these Song filters as a stream filters through the golden pebbles and silver sand into common use, till it becomes a daily refreshment for all men, sparkling on the board of kings and on the peasant's table. The singer sings first of all for those who have ears to hear; and it is by dint of seeing how this melody, which at first is to them the vaguest of voices, thrills through and inspires its immediate audience, that the duller ears awaken, and the song swells out into full music and meaning for ever a wider and a wider circle. This is the process in all ordinary cases; but there are cases which are not ordinary. To this rule, as to all others, there are exceptions. Now and then there comes into the world a sovran poet who needs no interpreters—whose verse wakes an echo in all but the very lowest intelligence, and creates a human heart where no heart seemed to be. These are so very few in number, that the definition which we have just attempted to give of the ordinary development of poetry among men is scarcely disturbed by the rare and exceptional apparition of a Homer far away amid the mist of ages—a

Dante towering high over the crowded mediæval world, or a Shakespeare, great enough almost to overbalance our little island—great figures who reign over all. The position of such monarchs requires no preparation—their thrones have been ready for them from the beginning of time, and they take their places with all the gentle grace of nature, seeing no wonder in it. Shakespeare needs neither interpretation nor defence. The soul which fails in loyal worship of his greatness, places itself beneath the level of ordinary human intelligence, and is worthy no notice of ours. But Wordsworth, for instance, stands on a very different level. He is a great poet, and one whose influence goes very deep, and whose fame stands very sure in the heart of England. Yet there probably never will be a time in which sceptics will not take exception to Wordsworth, and doubt his divinity; and there must always be a large class which will attain its appreciation of him only at second-hand, reflected through the warm appreciation of others. And it is Wordsworth, a man who has equals, and not Shakespeare, who has none,—whom it is necessary to accept as the representative of poetry among ordinary men.

There is, however, another class which we will not identify with any names, but which has existed in all times, snatching for itself an immense but evanescent reputation from its power of satisfying the common non-poetical mind with something which that mind takes to be poetry. The true poet is the sworn enemy of commonplace, but the sham poet is its apostle; and there is no art more immediately successful than that which places the general and common in the place of the natural, throwing over them that glow of sentimental colouring which

is appropriate to higher subjects, and presenting to the prosaic mind the delightful delusion that it is poetical. He who does this—who has the power of bringing the diction and music of poetry to the service of those commonplace views of men and things which are general to the common mass of humanity, and of clothing conventional despairs, miseries, and triumphs in the royal robes of song—may hope almost anything from the applause of his contemporaries. We all affect to despise the conventional in art; but how we love it let the walls of every picture-gallery and the pages of many a book testify. To elevate that commonplace so that it shall look as if it were nature—to deify that conventional till it seems heroic—is not an elevated use of poetry, but it is one which reaps an immediate reward. When a really good faculty is employed in this way there are scarcely any bounds to its triumph. It becomes universal, with a breadth almost Shakespearian—and is not Shakespearian, only because, fascinating all others, it fails to fascinate the poetically-minded, the real audience of true poetry. Thus there is, as it were, an advance and a rear guard to the army of song. The van is occupied by the sovran poet—the rear by the brilliant sham poet, who deifies vulgarity, and so tricks out the commonplace that it thinks itself divine.

To say that Byron added this power to the greater and more genuine poetical power which he undeniably possessed, will perhaps scarcely please the majority of his worshippers; but it seems to us a very important fact in his career. We have not a word to say against his greatness—he was a true poet; the fire divine was in his heart, the light celestial in his eyes; but along with his greatness he possessed the lower faculty which we have just de-

scribed. The commonplace was not repugnant to him. The secondary part of his nature—all that was not genius—was common, conventional, almost vulgar. He had pre-eminently that power of tricking out the poorest and most threadbare conceptions in glittering, sentimental, and heroic garments, which the multitude loves. He made the trite seem grand, and elevated the stilted conventional romance of the ordinary mind into something that looked like imagination. Thus, without anything of Shakespeare in him, he became almost as universal as Shakespeare. He passed all his contemporaries, true poets as great as he, at a gallop. While they made their way slowly into note, he took his place at once. He secured the suffrages of the poetically-minded because of his real genius, which they were incapable of mistaking, notwithstanding all the less noble, extraneous matter by which it was accompanied; and at the same time he seized upon the vulgar by the side of their vulgarity which he shared: he secured the common by his triumphant commonplace. The crowd took it for romance in the splendid flood of his song—they took it for passion, and leaped up in emulation, and felt themselves gods too, and Byrons. The misanthropies and stage tortures, the dark despairs and secret crimes, were far more comprehensible to them than were the true depths of nature, which it is a poet's real office to fathom. The sham horror, which was after their own heart, enchanted them and carried them away. Nowadays the Corsair, with his gloomy brow and gloomier conscience, is the acknowledged type of the conventional. When he is presented before us in the Surrey Theatre or elsewhere, we laugh undisguisedly, and recognise him as a familiar acquaintance. But in Byron's day, this

tragi-comic figure was a very revelation of conventionalism made poetical—the vindication and triumph of that beloved and comprehensible ideal which the vulgar love. This combination of true power and false power raised the poet above all his competitors. It secured to him at once the audience which was capable of judging and the audience which was incapable. For once in the history of the world, these two classes, so often hostile, met together, and hoisted up the favourite of fortune on their shoulders, so high that all the world saw him and recognised his greatness. It is this which has given him a place so remarkable in the history of poetry. Other men, without his genius, have thus propitiated the multitude, and snatched an evanescent triumph; but no true poet, we think, except Byron, has ever done it, and certainly no great poet—no artist of the real rank which he has a just right to claim.

The man who attained this singular position, and won this remarkable success, was one whose life it is too painful to treat in detail, or to enter into as we have done with the lives of other men, his fellows. He was in many respects a favourite of fortune. He had, as people say, everything in his favour—all the attractions of rank, nobility, personal beauty, and genius united in his person; and yet of all his generation he was perhaps the most unfortunate man of whom history preserves a record. Fortune did her worst for him in doing her best. We speak as heathens, feeling a helpless incapacity to use any other language; for can it be that Providence had anything to do with so fatal a beginning and so dark a career? We have already in another chapter paused to note the common and often-made contrast between the peasant-poet Burns and

the peer Byron, and we need not repeat what has been already said. Not only is it true that of these two men, starting from absolutely opposite points of the social scale, it was the ploughman who had every natural circumstance in his favour, and the patrician who had all against him; but we may add that not only Burns, but all his other competitors, stand out in happy contrast to Byron in the circumstances which attended the beginning of their life. Curiously enough, the greater part of them set out as he did without natural guidance or support in the beginning of their days. Cowper and Wordsworth and Coleridge were all orphans, cast out of the hand of God, as it were, to wander up and down on the face of the earth, and to win hardly and sorely for themselves the very standing-ground of existence; but in no case was the young poet so unhappy, so unfortunate, as the boy Peer, or placed at such immense disadvantages. He was ruined in his very cradle. All the malign fairies, if also some of the good ones, were assembled to his christening. What a story it is from beginning to end! every arrangement disposed for the worst, every precaution taken to keep sweet nature and gentle purity and kind love from the very nursery of the child, from the young man's crowded and bitter path. He was fond of inventing miseries for himself in after-days; but no misery that ever aroused a poetic imagination was half so terrible as the vulgarising circumstances that surrounded him: and he does not seem to have had anything in his character capable of resisting these painful and miserable influences. We do not speak of vices, or of those misdemeanours which are the fruit of so-called "passion," but of that general tenor of the soul which elevates or debases more than

even accidental vice is capable of doing. That fatal defect in nature which makes a man continually mistake the true object of being, which deprives him of the power to discriminate between the great and the small, between the external and the essential, which acts upon him mentally as imperfection of sight sometimes does physically, destroying the entire perspective, obliterating all sense of different magnitudes and distances, of weight and value—was Byron's first and saddest disadvantage in his struggle against the adverse fates. The "passions" and their attendant vices are bad enough; yet they exist sometimes in conjunction with such true nobleness of mind as attracts our warmest sympathy, and in the face of a conflict and struggle which, when successful, is the greatest thing in life—and which, even when unsuccessful, carries with it all the pathetic interest of tragedy. But Byron never affords us this lofty interest; he is astray in the world, not in a noble, but in a miserable way—reckoning everything not by too elevated but by too petty a rule, gauging the very heavens by the height of his poor little Baron's coronet, and measuring human nature by the standard of his own stature. In all the glory of his genius, his youth, his romantic position, and his natural beauty, who is there that can read Byron's life without a certain sense of shame for the littleness of the possessor of all these splendid and bewitching gifts? How simple, how generous, how open to all charities, such a youth ought to have been—what a grace of noble humility, courtesy, princely regard for others less favoured, should have surrounded that favourite of Heaven! Out of his superiority and greatness what respect for the weak, what consideration of the infirm, should have sprung! Where, if not in that

young poet, that young noble, that heir of fame, should all the chivalrous virtues and stainless flowers of honour have been found? But the real Lord Byron was about as unlike a knight as any commercial gentleman in his gig could be. He held something of the same code of greatness, if the truth must be told. He adored his own lordship as much as his footman did, and probably more. He was fond of raising a commotion, of making people stare, of getting himself remarked for his retinue, or his expenditure, or his jewellery, or his vices. An uneasy self-consciousness breathed about him. Probably the only point in which he was modest and honest towards himself, was that which concerned the highest part of him, his genius. For genius was great in him: but character was small. That first necessity of manhood was not only lamentably insufficient for his position, but it was warped and badly turned. It might be possible to forgive him everything else—all his actual sins, his indecorousness, his low code of morals—but it is hard to forgive so great a poet for being so little of a man.

It is, however, unfortunately too easy to find excuses in his training and early circumstances for many of his fundamental faults. George Gordon Byron was born in 1788; the son of a ruined *roué* of whom he never knew anything, and of a high-tempered, high-spirited, Highland woman, ruined and driven half mad by the spendthrift husband, whom still in her way she continued to love and admire for his very vices. Father he had none, except this disreputable memory of a man, with which he was sometimes taunted, and from which he could derive neither support nor honour; and little good, but much harm, came to him from his surviving parent, the furious, foolish, sometimes fond, and always

termagant mother, ruined in temper and nerves as well as in purse, who had once been an heiress, courted and caressed, and whose poverty had neither dignity nor patience to make it tolerable. The first scene of his life opened in a little house, "up a stair," in Aberdeen, where this disappointed and exasperated woman—clinging with all the desperation of genteel poverty to recollections of her wealthier past and fantastic hopes of a future which should make up for all her privations—by turns fondled and vituperated the solitary, bright-eyed, club-footed boy, who was very affectionate to his nurse, and fell into baby-love with his little girl-companions, but has nothing else recorded of him as an individual being. The way in which rank is deified in such circumstances is unhappily very well known to most observers. Such a little household bowing down in miserable worship of a rag of nobility, or even gentility, and referring everything in earth and heaven to the standard of my cousin Lord So-and-so, is a sight which we have all looked upon with ridicule, or reprobation, or gentler pity and shame, as the case and our tendencies may be. But the intensity of this worship was increased in Byron's case by the fact that chance might at any moment elevate the very worshippers into a sudden heaven of aristocracy. This was the dazzling hope which animated the obscure life in which the child-poet received his earliest impressions. Many a lonely woman in such circumstances has inspired her child with high resolutions and the most noble of hopes. The world has been conquered, how often, at their mother's knee, by men never fated to gain any earthly battles; and many a sweet dream of greatness—ambition too visionary, too distant, to have any of the vulgar force of that real passion—has

wrapt mother and child in that profoundest tenderest union, sometimes coming to nothing, but sometimes, too, coming to noble issues, high labours, and triumph, and reward. But Mrs. Byron never breathed into her son such ambitions or hopes. What she held up before him was a Peerage, and the glorious thought that one day or other his name might be recorded in its immortal pages. He was but a poor little boy then, hustled in the street perhaps, noways respected by his comrades, going to school most likely with the "merchant's" son from the nearest shop, and no more thought of than Jock or Jamie; yet the time might come when he would be a Lord. This was his earliest inspiration; nothing higher was dreamt of in the atmosphere where his young mind first unfolded with all its intense desires and appetites. Whether there is any real indication of a capacity for purer influence in the foolish story of that childish passion which was brought to an end at ten years old, it is hard to tell; but imagination loves to believe that the gentle quiet of the little feminine play-room, in which the baby-lovers sat and cooed together, while the little lady's sister dressed her doll, soothed the fretted spirit of Mrs. Byron's boy, and might have ameliorated his existence had any such calm influence continued with him. But grey Aberdeen, and the nurse whom he was fond of, and the little love, and the familiar world which was so careless of his pretensions, all pass away like the changing of a scene in an opera. There was a "roup" in the house, and all the effects of the Byrons produced some seventy pounds, when the great transformation accomplished itself. And the next scene is Newstead Abbey: noble old ecclesiastical place, having, it would seem, the proverbial curse of

all such desecrated foundations, ruinous and splendid, and full of evil tales of the past lords: and at eleven, God help him! his mother's hope was accomplished, and the child became Lord Byron, attaining at one step all that he had been taught to look up to as greatest in the world.

This is, fortunately for mankind, and specially for titled mankind, a very rare and unusual trial. Most of those who are born to the perils of rank have at least the safeguard of being used to it, and finding their position natural. They have the gentle indifference of use and wont to deaden any sentiment of elation or overwhelming sense of superiority; and though this is sometimes scarcely enough to calm down that glorious consciousness, it at least keeps it within bounds. But Byron had been so brought up as to be something like the proverbial "beggar on horseback." It was not his fault, or at least it was not entirely his fault. It was the miserable result of false training, a low order of ideas, a false position, and a mistaken estimate of human things and ways. Had his mind, as separate from his genius, been of a higher order, he would have righted himself, and got free of the evil bias which had been given to his young life. But his mind was rigid, and when once set into any habit of thought, very difficult to move from it. In the second chapter of his life, too, which was still more important than the first, he was almost as entirely left to the sway of chance as if he had been an Arab of the streets. He had no friends to guide him in the doubly dangerous passage from youth to manhood. His guardian kept aloof, frightened, it is said, by the mother, who stood in the way of every discipline; and no other man or woman in the world had the courage to confront that termagant,

or make any effort to help the boy, who very soon, as was natural, emancipated himself from the foolish, furious, and capricious sway which had no reason in it, though doubtless he took advantage of her assistance to resist other authority. Thus he grew up unchecked and uncontrolled, with no reverence for anything, no sense of loyalty, no power of submission. Unhappy boy! with his noble genius and his limited soul he came into a world which afforded him nothing to respect and nobody to love. Nobody to love, does the reader ask, with perhaps a smile? Yes, shoals of beings less than himself, to love contemptuously, coarsely, foolishly, as he called loving—but not one to inspire him with the true love of veneration, romance, and that worship which ennobles at once the lover and the loved. He does not seem to have had any ideal even, except of external beauty: no visionary nobleness attracted him. Neither in man nor in woman had he ever met with, or did he hope to meet with, anything to revere. He stood in a world where the best that was, was on his own level, nothing above, most things beneath. Once more we repeat, Unhappy boy! the best part of nature and its highest affections were thus obscured and veiled over for him. His great capacity failed him in that highest region, his eyes lost their insight, he became ignorant and dull as any boor in the plenitude of his genius. Could the veil but have been withdrawn, could Byron have seen the higher as he saw the lower, what a difference would that extension of the moral horizon have made!

It is curious enough, and shows his strangely rigid adherence to a theory once formed, to note that he got through Harrow without any diminution of the *parvenu* haughtiness which sits so ill upon gentle blood and ancient lineage. It is

not easy to imagine any atmosphere in which it can be more difficult to keep up this pride of caste than in the free air of a public school, in the midst of that little republic ruled by an oligarchy, which has no foundation on distinctions or degrees existing outside. Byron, however, passed through Harrow without being shaken from his little citadel of pomp and consequence; and when we hear that he asked one of his school-fellows to keep silent about the fault of another, on the ground that the culprit was "a brother peer," we do not know whether to admire most the boy's strange power of resistance to the public opinion of the place, or his deficiency in that sense of humour which serves instead of wisdom to so many of us, and keeps us from making ourselves ridiculous.

Thus Byron entered upon life without moral guidance or support of any kind, amid all the temptations of an unusually dangerous position, with no example or tradition in his own family but those of dissipation and debauchery, and without any friend to protect him from the consequences of his inexperience, or to tempt him to virtue; and notwithstanding the rank of which he thought so highly, and the independence which probably many a foolish lad would envy him, few men in any class, even the poorest, have begun life so utterly unprovided, so impoverished and friendless. He had every gift that even imagination could desire, except the gift of knowing how to use them. From a very early age he seems to have written verses, but verses scarcely remarkable enough to warrant any prophecy of his future greatness; nor, indeed, does he himself appear to have foreseen the fame which awaited him, or in these early days to have looked forward with any excitement

or enthusiasm to the career of poet. His first little volume, however, decided his fate. Nothing can be more vain than to speculate what might or might not have occurred in case of some contingency which never happened; and therefore it would be foolish to assert that, had Jeffrey never assailed the "Hours of Idleness," "Childe Harold" and "Don Juan" would never have come into being. But there can be little doubt that Jeffrey's assault was the first great impetus given to Byron's genius, which, without that sharp prick, might have dallied for years longer with its budding powers before it rushed into the field. The "Hours of Idleness" would seem truly to be described by their title; they were, as their author describes them in one of the letters of the time, "the effusions of a boy;" and he informed the world, with much grandeur in his preface, that "it was highly improbable, from my situation and pursuits hereafter, that I should ever obtrude myself a second time on the public." But the effect produced upon the young poet's life by this languid and harmless publication was such as no one could have divined. The whole event is too far past, the sin was too promptly punished, and the effect of it was on the whole too good, to warrant us in re-reviewing the review which stung Byron into life. Amid all the partialities of criticism, the almost inevitable *pénchant* towards the work of friends and disinclination to applaud an enemy, it is very rarely that an unhappy reviewer picks up a work at random with the intention for once of doing simple justice, without laying himself open to some frenzied attack. Why select *my* work? the victim cries. "Out of the thousand and one volumes of indifferent verse which happened to be printed in the year 1807, only one bore a noble

name on the title-page: and the opportunity of insulting a lord was too tempting to be resisted," says Byron's advocate. We have no desire to defend Jeffrey, whose shortcomings were glaring enough; but certainly it was hard upon him to be subjected to this quite unnecessary animadversion; and he never did a more effectual piece of work in his life than when he insulted the lord in question. The young giant got up from his youthful affectations and languor in all the fury of wounded *amour propre* and injured pride. The shaft pierced through and through his silken garments. It was the first real vivifying touch which he had met with in his life.

To our own thinking, it was great condescension on the part of the big and popular Review, then at the very zenith of its greatness—but with no prophetic power given to it to enable it to divine that this was Byron—to trouble itself about the boy's verses. But the boy came to violent life under the hands of that skilful operator. After the gentle little commencement made in placid superiority and grandeur, with a sense that it was "highly improbable" that so lofty and splendid a figure should ever again "obtrude itself" upon the public, what a fiery and real start was that which the poet made in his first genuine and energetic production! No sham sentiments were there, no copies of verses labelled with initial letters like drawers in a cabinet, but one furious flood of real and glowing invective, genuine expression of that contempt for everybody's works and powers which filled the soul of the noble poet, looking down from his platform upon all the petty people round him. The great and the small, the names which are household words and those which have faded alto-

gether out of our memory—the young Ishmael spared none of them. Because he himself had been chastised, it seemed natural to him that all his poetical contemporaries who were already known to the world should taste the whip. He sacrificed a whole hecatomb of reputations to the manes of that still-born fame of his own, whose decease he attributed to Jeffrey's blow. Not only Scott, Wordsworth, and Coleridge, but virtuous Southey and musical Moore, and even Monk Lewis, and Graham of the 'Sabbath,' and Bowles of the 'Sonnets,' every soul who wrote in rhyme shared the outpouring of his fury. They had nothing to do with the 'Edinburgh Review,' or his own slaughter in it. Yet he reviled them as if they had every one had a hand in his humiliation; never was such a burst of rampant self-assertion and disdain of all authority. "Down with everybody" was the device of this wild champion's banner. Such a production is not likely to procure permanent fame for any man, notwithstanding that the "Dunciad" still holds its place in literature, and is still discussed and annotated. But "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" has a human interest above that of its poetry. It was the birth-pang of the poet. He came furious to life ready-armed like Minerva, blazing in sudden light and deadly power, with a quiver full of poisoned arrows, and an unsheathed sword which cut wherever it touched. The whole earth shook with this unexpected and prodigious onset. Edition after edition came pouring from the press, and the poet, panting and breathless from his exertions, was already crowned with the sudden result they had won for him, before he had wiped the moisture from his brow, or laid his weapons out of his hand.

This was the first birth, or rather manifestation, of Byron's genius, and it was a very characteristic one. Impatient of remark, furious at censure, sceptical of all excellence, he poured forth his own violent criticisms and mockeries with a glowing power and fervour which it was impossible to mistake; no more hours of idleness—hours of passion and heat and excitement, which printed their impression, temporary yet vigorous, upon the world, and made men hold their breath. It is easy to imagine the commotion raised in the literary atmosphere by this rush of the new actor upon the stage, like a caged lion into the old Colosseum, or its modern Spanish representative into the arena. Nobody could doubt the reality of the new appearance, or its immense energy and promise of unforeseen power.

Before, however, we quit this preface to his existence, there are two things to be mentioned which are very greatly to the credit of the young poet. When the "Hours of Idleness" were first published, a clergyman, who knew Lord Byron well, and who had apparently some influence with him, wrote to him objecting to certain poems which were, according to the language of the time, "too warmly expressed." "The imagination of the young bard," says Moore, "had indulged itself in a luxuriousness of colouring beyond what even youth could excuse." The first copy of the work had been presented to this gentleman, Mr. Becher, and his protest was made in the gentle form of a "copy of verses." The headstrong young man, who was so little amenable to criticism, immediately responded to this representation. He did a most heroic thing for a boy of twenty to do. He called in the volume, of which, we are told, only one copy had got out of his reach,

and cancelled the whole edition, in order to satisfy his friend and abolish the objectionable verses. It is right that such a fact should be noted to his honour; and it is all the more honourable from the proof he soon gave of his furious resentment of the public criticism which was inspired by anything but friendship. A few years later, he did another generous and creditable act of a similar kind: when his reputation was established, and when perhaps he had begun to be a little ashamed of the vehemence of his youthful self-defence, he struck out "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" from his works, sending orders to his publisher, according to Moore, "to commit the whole impression to the flames," and steadily refused to allow its republication. This resolution was taken no later than 1812, so that what he did at twenty he cancelled at twenty-four. These two acts of reparation, unforced and voluntary, are enough to cover a multitude of literary sins.

Byron went abroad immediately after the publication of his satire. Whatever the cause might be, this young Peer, educated at Harrow and Cambridge, with all the *prestige* of his title, and with all the means of acquiring acquaintances, if not friends, which his bringing-up must have made inevitable, seems to have been as lonely in London as any poor clerk from the distant recesses of the country. He had no one to stand by him when he took his seat, lonely and defiant, in the House of Lords; and to a mind which attached so much importance to the privileges of rank this must have been doubly mortifying. He seems to have had no means of introduction into society. Nobody noticed him, except Jeffrey; and it was with a proud disappointment and solitude of soul, more real than most people suppose, that he set out upon his

first expedition to the East. These were the days of the war, when our easy highway across the Continent did not exist, and the nearest way to begin this journey was by ship to Lisbon, a voyage which he made in company with various officers on their way to the scene of war. This was the beginning of "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage." It was made when he was just one-and-twenty, an age at which it is difficult to believe that any great amount of debauchery could have been possible. He had held carnival at Newstead, unrestrained by any sober influence, for very brief intervals now and then, and had indeed just wound up his youthful life in England by a short time spent there in the company of a few of his favourite friends of his own age, no doubt an uproarious and not very decorous assembly; but the lads, however vicious and undisciplined, could scarcely have gone to any very terrible lengths at so early a period. We believe that a great many readers associate the poem of "Childe Harold" entirely with the latter portion of Byron's life, and accept the attitude assumed by the poet in the first canto as something not inappropriate to the natural feelings which might move a man abjured by society and his friends, ruined in personal reputation, and expelled from everything that could be called a home. But it must be remembered that this was not in the least degree his case in 1809. He was twenty-one. He had no home, because he had no relations, and because it was impossible for his mother and himself to "get on," as people say, together; and he had no doubt already a local reputation which was anything but desirable. But every one knows how little local reputation affects a man in the bigger world of society, and with what ease that world forgives

such stigmas as those which alone could stain Byron's youth. The sentiments of "Childe Harold" could not therefore have any foundation in reality; but yet their fantastic and artificial misanthropy was not without some excuse. The young man, if not so guilty or so miserable as he made himself out to be, was yet very lonely and friendless: and a great deal of exaggeration may be allowed to youth in respect to that forlorn sense of solitude which sometimes possesses it like a passion. The self-conscious tragic attitude of the "Childe" is indeed quite characteristic of youth, and as such has a certain claim upon the indulgence of everybody who has been young, and has felt the luxury of being miserable. It was the first time that this luxury, in which most of us have indulged in our day, had been presented in a poetical shape to the world. It was quite false; and yet it was true: the reasons given were sham, and so were the sentiments, and yet the state of mind was real. Indeed, its very artificialness made it real, if we may use a paradox, and helped, as nothing else could, to express the strange chaos of wilfulness and waywardness, of suffering and self-importance, of complacent masquerading and genuine uneasiness, which so often fill a mind of twenty when left to itself.

Byron's journey was begun in what seems to us a very magnificent way, and one which was little in keeping with his impoverished fortunes, however it might accord with his own splendid ideas of his importance. We who are used to the exploits of young men "of quality" in many wild ways of adventure, and who have learned that it is possible for a lord to travel with very scant attendance, and fight his way like any other young Englishman, can scarcely restrain a smile at the following description of

the retinue which this very poor and indeed obscure young lord thought necessary: — "Fletcher begged so hard that I have continued him in my service," he writes to his mother on the eve of his departure. "If he does not behave well abroad, I will send him back in a transport. I have a German servant (who has been with Mr. Wilbraham in Persia before, and was strongly recommended to me by Dr. Butler of Harrow), Robert and William; *they constitute my whole suite.*" Four men for the personal service of this one boy! Nothing could give a more amusing picture of his pomp and consequence. "The pecuniary supplies necessary towards his outset at this epoch were procured from money-lenders, at an enormously usurious interest," is the unintentional comment supplied by Moore. Even in this respect no one seems to have had sufficient interest in the young man to attempt to restrain him from expenditure so foolish. Thus he set out, his yeoman and his page being supplied for all necessary poetic uses, and plunged, with all his conventionalities about him, into the novelty of the unknown. We will not attempt to follow him through his wanderings. The reader will find the topography in "Childe Harold," where indeed crowds of readers did find and delight in it, spending an extraordinary amount of enthusiasm upon the two earlier cantos of that poem. It would be difficult to say too much of the power of the versification, or of the energy and life of the descriptions therein contained; but we avow that it is extremely difficult to us to understand how, apart from all Byron produced afterwards, this splendid guide-book should have taken such absolute possession of the popular mind, especially as in those days travel was an almost forbidden luxury,

and the number of persons who could be attracted to the poem by a desire to compare their own emotions with that of the poetical wanderer must have been very small. The great charm of the poem, however, we believe—its chief popular attraction—lay in the wanderer himself, shadowy as he is, and vague in personality. He was, let us remember, the very first sketch of that *blaisé* poetical misanthrope, who has since done so much service, and who in many different disguises charmed the popular soul for years after, the very incarnation of the conventional picturesque. He it was who gave the charm of romance to all those melodious verses which celebrated the praises of "August Athena," of "Stern Albania's hills," and "Dark Suli's rock," and, nearer home, of "Lovely Spain, renowned romantic land!" The reader, as he roamed from verse to verse among the dark-eyed Lusitanian maids and Turkish houris, between the wild Albanian and the high-capped Tartar, was always conscious of another standing by, trying to distract himself by all the scenes and figures that passed along the surface of the panorama, but ever hugging to him his mysterious solitude, his passionate recollections, his inconsolable sadness. There was not very much absolutely about Harold except in the first few pages; but Harold was in the very air, brooding over the verse. Each line was read with a little thrill of expectation; throughout every page attention was on the alert to find again that wanderer in his splendid superiority seeing everything as if he saw it not, occupied with his own thoughts, musing over his fatal memories. And when a universal whisper ran through the world—whisper which nobody could trace, and still less contradict—that the poet himself

was that mysterious personage, the interest swelled higher and deeper. All the internal evidence was in favour of this idea, and the immediate zest of a living romance spread over the reading world. The story, slight and vague as it was, became real on the spot, and people pored over it with a view to discovering the secret of the poet's trouble, as well as the quality of his genius. Such an addition to the attractions of poetic literature it would be difficult to overestimate. The lovers of Byron will grudge, perhaps, that any secondary reason should be called in, in order to explain the first marvellous success of this poem; and had "Childe Harold" been published entire we should have sought no secondary reasons; but it must be remembered that it was to the first two cantos that the world responded with enthusiasm so universal, and that these are not the portions of the poem to which we now turn with the greatest pleasure. The beauty of the poetry, indeed, is not enough to explain its immense popularity; for, fine as that is, it is not finer than portions of Shelley's long descriptive poems, which won nobody's ear; and nothing like so real as Wordsworth, which shared the same fate. And long stretches of descriptive poetry, however fine, are slow to attract the ordinary reader. It was Harold who attracted him. It was Byron, the real Harold, who riveted that attraction. To us nowadays the presence of a self-absorbed, darkly-musing figure, roaming about with finger on lip and eyes full of wild meanings—or, with his arms folded in his romantic cloak, contemplating the things and sights around from the summit of a melancholy superiority,—is no attraction, but rather provokes a smile. We name the apparition at once: we have known

him all our lives. But to Byron's age this poetical spectator was equally new and delightful. He fascinated the world, as every novel development of a trite fancy does. No straining of faculties was necessary to comprehend him. He was most lofty, grand, and superior, and yet he was within the reach of every capacity. The guide-book details with which he chose to surround himself grew sublime because of that cynic smile, that "hollow laugh," that scowl and sigh. Never was there a more perfect hit, a more successful combination of the poetical and ethereal with the commonplace; and this brilliant hit, this popular success, was expressed in the language of true poetry, brilliant and vigorous. When these elements which are so seldom combined came together, the result was not mere applause, but a very triumph.

Thus when Byron returned to England in 1812, and gave this work to the world, he took his place at one bound on the highest pedestal of fame—he "awoke one morning and found himself famous." The reputation produced by his satire, which was of a less attractive description, was swallowed up at once in this. People whom he had abused forgave him; other poets, with a generosity which, to say the truth, is not very usual, forgot the blow he had administered in admiration of this new flood of song. The languid verse-maker of the "Hours of Idleness," the infuriated satirist of "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," vindicated himself, so to speak, at once for his languor and his fury. He proved to demonstration that Jeffrey and all the critics had been wrong, and that he had a certain right to be angry; and neither Jeffrey nor any other man had it now in their power to touch his position: he had proved his pos-

session of that gift which no training can give, and no wealth can buy. He had won his spurs; his rank was no longer contestable, or contingent upon any possibility.

It is, however, a sign of the confusion of his own mind on the subject—a confusion very general with great writers, but which in this case it is somewhat difficult to explain—that Byron seems for the first moment to have kept his real poem in the background, and to have contemplated a mere continuance of his warfare with wits and critics. The account given by Mr. Dallas, his relation and, to a certain extent, editor—for he seems to have taken all the trouble of publication off the hands of the poet—shows this confusion in the most curious way. Byron had just only arrived in London when the following conversation took place:—

"He was very animated in the account of his travels, but assured me" (it is Mr. Dallas who speaks as quoted by Moore) "that he never had the least idea of writing them. He said he believed satire to be his forte, and to that he had adhered, having written, during his stay abroad, a Paraphrase of Horace's 'Art of Poetry,' which would be a good finish to 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.' He seemed to promise himself additional fame from it, and I undertook to superintend its publication as I had done that of the Satire. I had chosen the time ill for my visit, and we had hardly any time to converse uninterruptedly, he therefore engaged me to breakfast next morning."

"In the interval Mr. Dallas looked over this Paraphrase, which he had been permitted by Lord Byron to take home with him for the purpose, and his disappointment was, as he himself describes it, 'grievous,' on finding that a pilgrimage of two years to the inspiring lands of the East had been attended with no richer poetical result. On their meeting again next morning, though unwilling to speak disparaging-

ly of the work, he could not refrain, he informs us, from expressing some surprise that his noble friend should have produced nothing else during his absence. 'Upon this,' he continues, 'Lord Byron told me that he had occasionally written short poems, besides a great many stanzas in Spenser's measure, relative to the countries he had visited. They are not worth troubling you with, but you shall have them all with you if you like.' So came I by 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.' He took it from a small trunk with a number of other verses. He said they had been read but by one person, who had found very little to commend, and much to condemn; that he himself was of that opinion, and he was sure I should be so too. Such as it was, however, it was at my service; but he was urgent that the Hints from Horace should be immediately put in train, which I promised to have done."

Moore goes on to tell us that "it was some time before Byron's obstinate repugnance to the idea of publishing 'Childe Harold' could be removed;" but this is contradicted by other testimony, and probably was no more than that liking to be urged into a step he wished to take which is not an uncommon peculiarity of character even with people who are not poets. But it would appear that there was a considerable uncertainty in his mind for some brief time, in respect to the two styles of composition, which were so widely different; and that but for Dallas, Byron, dazzled by his first success in vituperation, would rather, had he been left to himself, have wrecked his reputation (for the moment) by a return to the subject, than established it by the calmer strains of true poetry which he had written for his own pleasure. Fortunately he permitted himself to be advised; and with scarcely an interval the unknown and unfriended young man whom nobody cared for, or thought

of, or invited, whose sole surroundings were his few college acquaintances, none of them distinguished, and who had as little to do with society as any city clerk, suddenly became the courted and applauded lion of London. His position changed in the twinkling of an eye. "In place of the desert which London had been to him but a few weeks before," says Moore, "he now not only saw the whole splendid interior of high life thrown open to him, but found himself among its illustrious crowds the most distinguished object."

In the mean time he had lost his mother, the only being in the world, so far as appears, who really loved him with a natural and legitimate love. Poor woman! she was not a model of what a mother should be; neither was he a model of a son. There is a book extant, we are told, in which every scrap of criticism or remark made upon his early works is preserved, with annotations in her hand, which one would have liked to see. She believed in his genius from the beginning; and he—went to work with the gloves, and had a violent sparring-match with his servant after her funeral procession had left the gates of Newstead. The two were alone in the house, all the rest of the household having accompanied the poor soul to her grave. Unhappy lad! probably it was no want of feeling which suggested that ill-timed exercise. It seems more likely to have been a wild physical outburst of dumb misery and defiance, that defiance of all subduing influence and bettering emotions, and at the same time of all pain and personal suffering, which distinguished his whole life.

Byron remained in England for five years, from 1811 to 1816. During this period he produced the greater part of his poetical tales, the

"Giaour," "Corsair," "Lara," "Bride of Abydos," "Siege of Corinth," and "Parisina." All that is most striking in these poems, with all their varieties, is the familiar burden of his verse played in now one, now another key. It matters little what his hero is called, Lara, or Conrad, or Harold, the form is the same, the *pose* the same; and indeed it is one of the wonders of literary skill that the same figure should pass through so many different scenes, and be the subject of so much fine exposition, without ever apparently losing its first attraction to its creator, or, it would seem, striking his readers with its curious monotony. It is interesting to contrast these tales with the poetical romances of Scott, which probably suggested them, and which had at least set the fashion of this kind of production. There can be no doubt of the superiority of Byron in point of poetry. His verse is not that of a simple minstrel, the breathless lay which leaves us no time to criticise, nor thought of fault-finding. The poet in this case stands upon a higher level. With Scott the story is everything: now and then he pauses to repose himself upon the side of some hill, or on the green banks of lake or river, of which he gives a charming description, delighting and refreshing the listener like a few bars of a familiar melody in the midst of a piece of dramatic music; but these are mere digressions, and the tale is always the principal matter to be considered. With Byron the effort is different—the tale is less important, the poetry is greater. His stories are monotonous, common, and insignificant; and we doubt whether the most sentimental of bosoms ever felt a thrill of real sympathy for any of the secondary personages involved. The Zuleikas and the Medoras are totally indif-

ferent to us; but who would be indifferent to such a piece of verse as this?—

'He who hath bent him o'er the dead
Ere the first day of death is fled,
The first dark day of nothingness,
The last of danger and distress
(Before Decay's effacing fingers
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers),
And marked the mild angelic air,
The rapture of repose that's there,
The fixed yet tender traits that streak
The languor of the placid cheek,
And, but for that sad, shrouded eye,
That fires not, wins not, weeps not, now,
And but for that chill changeless brow,
Where cold obstruction's apathy
Appeals the gazing mourner's heart,
As if to him it could impart,
The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon;—
Yes, but for these, and these alone,
Some moments, ay, one treacherous hour,
He still might doubt the tyrant's power.
So fair, so calm, so softly sealed,
The first, last look by death revealed!
Such is the aspect of this shore;
'Tis Greece, but living Greece no more!
So coldly sweet, so deadly fair,
We start, for soul is wanting there;
Hers is the loveliness in death,
That parts not quite with parting breath;
But beauty with that fearful bloom,
That hue that haunts it to the tomb,
Expression's last receding ray,
A gilded halo hovering round decay,
The farewell beam of feeling past away,
Spark of that flame perchance of heavenly
birth,
Which gleams, but warms no more its cher-
ished earth.

It is unnecessary, however, to quote at length from poems so well known. They were the fashion of their time, just as it is now the fashion of verse to elucidate character, and sound the depths of human nature by way of showing its infinite diversities. Scott's tales were all wholesome, natural, and sweet, like his own character, and as became his minstrel's art; but Byron's, though inferior in every human sentiment, strike a higher key of poetry. Their melody is deeper, though not their meaning. Scott carries us onward with his tale, touching us with a hundred simple emotions, sympathies, re-

grets, through all the fluctuations of the story. But we read Byron with a totally different kind of pleasure, with no sympathy at all, nor any emotion in particular—even with a suppressed smile at our Corsair, whom we know so well, and a complete indifference to the lady of his love, whichever lady that may be. One is a charming, clear, melodious narrative, swift and animated as the course of a stream; but the other is poetry. It has less interest, but more charm. We can define the power of Scott, and how it comes about; but we cannot define the power of Byron. It is that, even when he is least worthy, he is still and always a poet, with some certain indescribable influence over us by the combination of his words and the *élan* of his song, which is stronger than we, stronger than reason or meaning, or anything that is definable. “Lara” and the “Giaour” and even “Parisina” might be swept off the face of the earth without leaving humanity a whit the poorer, and even without doing the reputation of Byron any harm; but even in these inferior productions there dwells the poet’s charm.

We will not attempt to enter into the lamentable story of his marriage, and all that came of it. It is one miserable adjunct of greatness, that its failures, its sins, and miseries cannot be kept within the veil of decent privacy which happily envelopes common life. Whatever the truth of the story is, it is as painful a story as ever disgusted and grieved any listener, and we are not at all disposed to stir up once more the smouldering scandal. It seems to us that almost all the people concerned were to blame—the two who seem to have married each other for need or for pride, or for anything but love, and all who stood by and assented to the union

of the ruined and dissolute young man with the inexperienced and indulgent young woman, who probably had no idea of the qualities necessary to make a wife for a reformed rake, and no mind to undertake that *role*. Byron had sufficiently insisted upon his own character in his poetry, and it is to be supposed that Scandal had not spared him, and that there must have been plenty of people “in society” who were qualified to inform the lady’s friends of all his antecedents. But however that may be, it is certain that a late detestable revival of the most detestable of rumours has done more to injure the character which Byron’s wife had acquired in the younger world which knew not Byron, than to produce any other result. It is impossible to conceive of any more unnecessary or more painful reopening of a question which time had calmed into silence, and it is very difficult to keep within the boundaries of conventional good-manners in any reference to the originators of that uncalled-for assault. It is a question with which, Heaven be praised, we have nothing to do. It is enough for us that an unhappy and ill-omened marriage did take place, and that a separation followed a year after. During that year everything but poetry went badly with the poet. His debts overwhelmed him, execution after execution was in the house to which he had taken his bride, and all the misery of a spendthrift and prodigal seems to have come upon him at the time when other miseries were gathering round his head. We have no inclination to brand Byron with any of the terrible vices which have been imputed to him; but it is scarcely possible to pity him in this crisis, which he had worked for and brought upon himself. Consistent disregard of all the ordinary rules of

humanity come to but one end for poets as for common men—ruin to those who lavish money not their own, and desertion and abandonment to those who think natural affection beneath them, and, without loving, expect to be loved. Without any deeper blame, this was undeniably Byron's case; and the outburst of scandal which, aggravated by his fame, burst all at once upon his head, is neither to be wondered at, nor, to our thinking, blamed. Morality has no special code for poets; and that a man should reap as he has sown is a law which embraces every human creature, whatever his rank, mental or social.

Having said this, we will say no more about one of the most tragical events of modern times. Its effect upon Byron the poet, as distinguished from Byron the man, was a very remarkable one. "It is odd, but agitation or contest of any kind gives a rebound to my spirits, and sets me up for the time," he himself says. And as the assault of the 'Edinburgh Review' stung him into poetic life at first, so this much more violent and terrible blow stimulated him, as it were, into a new poetical existence, pouring fire into his veins and inspiration into his song. Though the moment of the crisis itself is signalled by one of the most mawkish "copies of verses" ever manufactured to the pattern of pretended emotion—a production so tame and so false as to make the reader doubt whether there was any real feeling whatsoever in the mind of the man who was capable of producing it—yet the after-effects did no such discredit to the tragedy. What vulgar impulse of his lower nature it was which dictated his "Farewell" it is impossible to tell. If these verses were produced, as we are told, in "a swell of tender recollections, the tears falling fast on the paper as he

wrote them," then there must have been in Byron a still lower depth of conventional sentimentality than we were prepared for. They were not intended for publication, we are told, and came to the world through "the injudicious zeal of a friend whom he had suffered to take a copy." But verses like these are not written for a sufferer's private solace; and men do not allow copies to be taken by injudicious friends of self-revelations which they do not mean to make public. The poem is such a one as might almost be given in a burlesque of the whole story, as appropriate to be uttered by a noble sentimentalist on such a touching occasion; and its weakness, and the glaring bad taste of its publication, take all the dignity out of Byron's retreat from England. Such snivelling could only be saved from contempt by the disagreeable suspicion that all the time there was a sneer in it—a smile aside to some hidden audience, who winked back again as they looked on, holding their sides at this attempt to throw dust in the public's eyes.

But very different was the result when, bursting away from all the tragic shame and ruin which had overwhelmed him, and from all the pretences of ordinary existence, Childe Harold, with real woes upon his head this time, and a life dishonoured and rent in twain, crossed the sea once more, and found a refuge in poetry, the last and surest shelter for the poet. On that familiar ground, where no individual defences or retractions were called for, and in the visionary position, such as it was, in which he first made himself illustrious, his spirit found expansion and relief. A new impulse of passion and power inspired him. If there is still a somewhat ostentatious display of his private grief and circumstances in the beginning of the third canto

of "Childe Harold," there is at the same time such a glow and fervour of poetry, such a thrill of quickened life and developed genius, as drives all criticism from our thoughts. The work changes in his glowing hands, unconsciously to himself. There is the same plan, the same central figure, but how different is the whole strain! It is no longer a poetic guide-book with one mysterious stranger in it. The threads of his web have become electric threads, vibrating far and wide. Costume and passive picturesqueness—the dark-eyed maids—the high-capped Tartars—all the paraphernalia of travel, are swept away by this new tide of power and passion. It is no longer a stripling essaying his powers who stands before us, but a man with strength to conduct the stream as he will, to lead it into new channels, to command the interest and breathless admiration of that audience which a little while ago had waked to its earliest wonderings about him, and had asked itself what he meant? Now every one had learned to know what he meant: and, resounding the wrongs of Byron over the world, yet touching by the way many a lofty theme and lovely spot, the great song pours on, inundating everything with a very flood of beauty and brightness, of majestic melody and irresistible feeling. In this third canto the poet comes to his majority, as it were, bursting through all the husks of budding genius, and revealing himself in his full proportions, in all the passion and power of his nature and of his genius. It is curious to pass, as so many readers have probably done, with nothing more than a dim wonder at the change, and consciousness that they "liked better" the conclusion than the beginning—from the tame beauty and artificial mysteriousness of the first part of

"Childe Harold," to the burning and glowing power of the second. The third canto is full of verses which have been as household words to us all our lives. Scarcely a line occurs which does not figure somewhere as a quotation. It is Byron's highest success in serious poetry. One greater effort still, his last and most triumphant work, was still to be commenced; but out of "Don Juan" there is nothing to be found in his productions which is comparable to the splendour and force of the third canto of Childe Harold. The sketch of the Eve of Waterloo, that brilliant piece of dramatic description, which perhaps one in ten of all Englishmen have got by heart one time or other, or know by heart without learning, and the almost equally popular but somewhat theatrical and inflated storm among the mountains, will come to every one's mind; but it is not merely in such episodes as these that the great tide of increased vigour shows itself. Every line is instinct with new force. The poet has nothing to reveal to us—no lesson, no message from on high; but the life which was so vague and histrionic to him a little while ago has become real. Even the theatrical exaggerations, of which he cannot divest himself—even the pretences, of which he is still far from being clear—have acquired a kind of truth from sheer dint of feeling. Take, for instance, this account of the recommencement of his wandering career. There is little fact in the picture, and yet how much more true and living it is than the vague despair of his first outset upon the world.

"Where rose the mountains, there to him
were friends;
Where rolled the ocean, thereon was his
home;
Where a blue sky, and glowing clime,
extends,
He had the passion and the power to roam:
The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,

Were unto him companionship; they
 A mutual language, clearer than the
 Of his land's tongue, which he would oft
 For Nature's pages glassed by sunbeams
 on the lake.

Like the Chaldeans, he could watch the
 stars,
 Till he had peopled them with beings
 bright
 As their own beams; and earth, and
 earth-born jays,
 And human frailties, were forgotten quite.
 Could he have kept his spirit to that
 light,
 He had been happy; but this clay will
 sink
 Its spark immortal, envying it the light,
 To which it mounts, as if to break the
 link
 That keeps us from yon heaven which
 woos us to its brink.

But in Man's dwellings he became a thing
 Restless and worn, and stern and weari-
 some,
 Drooped as a wild-born falcon with clipped
 wing,
 To whom the boundless air alone were
 home:
 Then came his fit again; which to o'er-
 come,
 As eagerly the barred-up bird will beat
 His breast and beak against his wry dome
 Till the blood tinge his plumage, so the
 heat
 Of his impeded soul would through his
 bosom eat.

Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again,
 With nought of hope left, but with less
 of gloom;
 The very knowledge that he lived in vain,
 That all was over on this side the tomb,
 Had made despair a smilingness assume,
 Which, though 'twere wild,—as on the
 plundered wreck,
 When mariners would wildly meet their
 doom
 With draughts intemperate on the sink-
 ing deck,—
 Did yet inspire a cheer, which he forbore
 to check."

It was not thus that Byron had
 left his native shores; and he had
 perhaps less real right to the reader's
 sympathy in his manhood than in
 his youth; but the ring of the music
 is richer, the sentiment is realised
 and intensified. The earlier Childs

Harold had been but a frantic inven-
 tion; the latter one, though a fiction,
 still had become an outlet for real
 passion and pain. The ideal man
 who was not in himself a lofty con-
 ception, rose even in the scale of
 imaginative being when he became
 a refuge and a consolation to his
 creator. The theatrical and conven-
 tional hero is henceforward a symbol,
 if nothing more, of a passionate, dis-
 appointed, reckless, and gifted man.

And all the poet's powers and
 perceptions expanded under the new
 stimulus. Let us select almost at
 random a landscape which is as far
 above the earlier conventional period
 as heaven is above earth, as Nature
 is to a sign-painter's daub. Every-
 thing is in it, sound and sight, and
 the sentiment of the scene, and its
 delicious mingling of sadness and
 devotion. We have but to shut
 our eyes, and the whole is before us;
 we have but to listen, and our heart
 is stolen out of our very bosom by
 the melody, the reality, the over-
 whelming subdued emotion and
 melting calm.

"It is the hush of night, and all be-
 tween
 Thy margin and the mountains, dusk,
 yet clear,
 Mellowed and mingling, yet distinctly
 seen,
 Save darkened Jura, whose cap heights
 appear
 Precipitously steep; and drawing near,
 There breathes a living fragrance from
 the shore
 Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on
 the ear
 Drops the light drip of the suspended
 oar,
 Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night
 carol more;

He is an evening reveller, who makes
 His life an infancy, and sings his fill;
 At intervals, some bird from out the
 brakes
 Starts into voice a moment, then is
 still.
 There seems a floating whisper on the
 hill;
 But that is fancy, for the starlight dew
 All silently their tears of love instil,

Weeping themselves away, till they
 infuse
 Deep into nature's breast the spirit of her
 hues.

Ye stars ! which are the poetry of heaven,
 If in your bright leaves we would read
 the fate
 Of men and empires,—'tis to be forgiven,
 That in our aspirations to be great,
 Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
 And claim a kindred with you ; for ye
 are
 A beauty, and a mystery, and create
 In us such love and reverence from afar,
 That fortune, fame, power, life, have
 named themselves a star.

All heaven and earth are still—though
 not in sleep,
 But breathless, as we go when feeling
 most ;
 And silent, as we stand in thoughts too
 deep :—
 All heaven and earth are still :—from
 the high host
 Of stars, to the lulled lake and moun-
 tain-coast,
 All is concentrated in a life intense,
 Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is
 lost
 But hath a part of being, and a sense
 Of that which is of all Creator and de-
 fence."

These lovely verses—and we know nothing of their kind more perfectly beautiful—were written at the time when Shelley and Byron spent days and nights floating in their boat upon Lake Lemán, and living a joint poetic life in sight of one of the fairest landscapes God has given to man. That man, and he the man who could write such lines, should desecrate this loveliest scene, and weave in with it another episode of discreditable story, is pitiful to think of—but at least it does not come into the verse. The evening calm is unbroken by any stale echo of so-called "passion;" the rose-tints of the sunset linger on the distant snow-peaks, the magical silence, all full of softened sounds, drops down like a benediction upon the two poets, the delicious night, which is but dim, not dark, envelopes them. Let us not pry further into the aspect and thoughts of the two

human creatures thus surrounded. Fate hung over them, threatening their youth with the visionary sword already suspended close to their heads. Shame and pain and bitter recompense of folly had already come to both. But a little way further before each lay the path still wreathed in flowers, still full of those possibilities which are never quite shut out from young men, even those who have most wasted their gifts and strength. But soon those flowery ways were to end in darkness. The compassionate human spectator lingers with a painful sympathy by their side in this moment of seeming calm. Both were strong in the sense of wrong, injured men in their own opinion, bearing the weight of England's intolerance, and incapacity to understand the minds of poets. But both were so young, spendthrifts of God's gifts, with no time before them to think better of it, no escape into a purer day possible for either. And howsoever we may blame and judge—as judge we must—yet the gentle heaven judged not, but sent down its dews and star-rays softly through the enchanted twilight upon the two young beautiful poets' heads, upon the two wasted lives. God help them ! Lives more forlorn, amid all their wealth of nature and favouring circumstances, were never thrown away under those peaceful skies.

Byron never returned to England ; he lived a disturbed and wayward life in Italy, now moving from one storied city to another, now lingering in unknown corners, doing little but indulge himself and his fancies, and writing much which it might have been as well he had not written. We will not attempt to discuss the productions of his later years, a task which neither space nor inclination encourages ; except indeed, the greatest of all his works,

the real and most lasting foundation of his fame. The Manfreds and Cains were but exaggerations doubly exaggerated of his favourite conventionalism; but "Don Juan" is all real. To speak of this poem and of morality in the same breath is simple foolishness, and so must every attempt be to explain or justify its freedom. We believe that, as a mere question of art, the narrowness which limits a man's life to a series of continual indulgences in one favourite sin and varying expressions of one passion, is as narrow as the creed of the poorest precisian who ever was scoffed at by poet. Libertinism is as limited, as cramping and confining, as petty a kind of bondage, as any puritanism; and "passion," so called, has as little claim to be considered the grand spring of human movements, as any other of the manifold impulses which make or mar us. And at the same time no poem can take the highest rank of poetic excellence which confines itself to a certain audience, whatever that audience may be. Byron boasts that he will not make "ladies' books *à la dilettar le femins et la plebe*;" and this is a foolish vaunt, which we have heard repeated in our own day by various new poets, who think it finer to write for a class than for humankind. But it ought to be understood by all capable minds that this is a very poor and false piece of bravado. Humankind, man and woman, small and great, is more worth writing for than any section of it, even were that section the most gifted, the most wise and great minds of their time. The whole is greater than a part; and he who chooses for himself a limited audience, ought at least to have the good sense to perceive that he is not bigger, but less in his aim, than other men—an amount of perception, however, with which we are not allowed to credit the poets who

profess to produce strong meat for men and not milk for babes. Every such pretension is of its very nature an apology for littleness, little as it is intended so to be.

When we say this we do not pretend to assert or to hope that in any but an ideal state of society it will be possible to maintain that poetry and morality must always go together. But we are confident in saying that few great poems, at least of those which have been written since Christianity began to affect the world (though even this limitation is scarcely necessary), are so interwoven with immoral situations and sentiments as to be inseparable from them, and to keep them continually before the reader. It is this characteristic which must always limit the fame of "Don Juan," a fault infinitely more serious than any amount of occasional aberrations into forbidden ways. Yet with all its manifold defects there is an easy power and mastery in it, which perhaps, more than any other poem of the time, gives to the reader the conception of strength and capacity almost unbounded. This, setting aside not only its morality, but its moral tone (two quite distinct things), and even setting aside the wonderful beauty of many passages, is the thing which strikes us most. The poet manages a measure by no means facile with the perfect ease of one to whom words are absolutely subject, and who can weave them as he likes, now splendidly, now fantastically, now with the most tragic, and now with the most trifling, meaning, but always with an invincible grace, facility, and lightness of touch, which fill the mind of the critic with a purely technical and professional admiration, in addition to the admiration which he must share with every lover of poetry. The melodiousness of the strain never glides, as it

does in Shelley's hands, into mere music, dropping the thread of articulate thought; everything is clear—every incident and detail, every vicissitude of the much-prolonged and lingering narrative. How it must have flowed forth, as natural, as easy as common talk, as spontaneous—boundless so far as the writer's capacity went, limited only by intention, and such poor human details as time and space, which keep the flood within inevitable channels! Even the occasional (and very occasional) jars in the verse give us a sense of careless force, never of poverty. That Byron did not take the trouble to alter here and there a defective line, seems part of the very freedom and ease and careless spontaneity of the strain. Thus it is strength, the sense of gigantic exertion without any strain of power, put forth as lightly as a child's play, yet as effectually as if the earth had been rent by the effort, which is the first great charm of the poem. With that hand so strong, so deft, so easy, so all-capable, what might not the poet do if he would? We are lost in admiration of his vast capacity, his smiling and careless power.

This is the first and greatest quality of "Don Juan." The exquisite passages with which the poem abounds, the absolute lucidity and distinctness of the narrative, and this sense of strength, and ease, and grace, and infinite capability, give to it a claim upon all who love and understand poetry. But when we have said this, we have stated only its real claims to greatness. It has another claim to another kind of greatness which has also been responded to largely, and which perhaps will continue to be responded to as long as men are such as they are. The figure of Don Juan himself carries out all we have said of the popularity of a vulgar and con-

ventional ideal. Once more, we have the very climax and apotheosis of commonplace in this handsome young hero, made of coarse flesh and blood, washed over with just that lack of outside refinement and sensibility which the vulgar love—who roams from love to love, and from adventure to adventure, always lucky, always safe to get clear of any scrape in which he finds himself. Such a personage is the incarnation of fine fancy to all commonplace and prosaic minds. Poor poet, who did not write books to delight the people! It is at once his glory and his shame that he himself loved no other ideal than that which is the god of the *plebe*; and it is the *plebe* only—meaning thereby no social class, but those minds which, irrespective of rank, occupy the lowest imaginative level, and are content with the poorest ideal—to whom his revelation was addressed. Cynicism is generally supposed to address itself to a more intellectual class; but the cynicism of "Don Juan" is exactly of the kind which delights the vulgar, and is their highest conception of superiority. This beautiful, daring, fortunate young hero goes about the world and sees the same weaknesses everywhere, and laughs. He is not ill-natured. On the contrary, he asks no better; he takes advantage of the imperfection of nature, and caresses her, and smiles, and goes on. They are all the same, high and low, old and young, he says with perfect complacency; he sees through them all, and does his best to please, and takes whatever he can get, and nods aside at the spectators. He has the ease, the grace, the strength of a god; and he has the soul of a costermonger; Heaven forgive us! there are virtuous costermongers as there are virtuous peers, and why we should thus stigmatise a class we know not.

But this hero of poetry, this epic impersonation of man, is of the commonest and meanest mental type of humanity. His superiorities are all superficial; he is comprehensible through and through—there is neither depth, nor mystery, nor any secret in him that can confuse the vulgarest reader. And accordingly, the vulgar, the *plébs* whom the poet affected to despise—those who in ordinary cases stare and gape at poetry—rose up and gave their coarse, unaccustomed hand to that other half of the world which prepares the thrones and pedestals of fame; and between them, while the song was still warm on his lips, this strange pair placed Byron on his pinnacle—an elevation half of real greatness, half of false fame—a place perhaps unparalleled in poetry, and entirely unique in England. Thus it was that, without pause or interval, Byron won everything, in point of reputation, which the world has to give.

We need not linger upon the later portion of his life. It had a kind of love in its last chapter which

gave him a kind of happiness—perhaps the only kind of love and happiness of which he was capable. His death was like his life—a mixture of the real and the false, of tragedy and mock tragedy, of some genuine generosity and sentiment and a great deal of counterfeit. Amid the wild, confused, and bewildering melodrama of Greek emancipation—amid strangers, with theatrical shouts in his ears, and operatic figures grouped about him, far away from any true affection or friend more trusted than an old servant—he died in the full flower of his days,—*Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita*. No more was granted to him, no time of reflection, no afternoon of thought. Never was life less happy, more forlorn and wasted, and never was end more pitiful. And thus all was ended upon earth for a man who had received every gift which Heaven could bestow upon a human creature—every gift except the one of knowing how to use the glorious faculties which God had put into his hands.

A TRUE REFORMER.—PART V.

CHAPTER XVII.—AN IMPOSING RECEPTION.

"Now then, girls, array yourselves in purple and orange; summon Annetta and produce your choicest garments in those colours; or, if you are not provided, let us sally forth and procure them forthwith. A dress of orange, say, with a purple scarf, and a purple bonnet with orange flowers; something in that style would look neat and expressive, wouldn't it? Anyhow there is not a moment to be lost, for we must all repair to the scene of war to-morrow at the very latest."

"What nonsense you talk, Charlie! as if we could possibly make ourselves into such frights. But do you really mean that you have been elected? I shall be so pleased——"

"Why, not exactly elected, my love; you go too fast, you little thing; but everything has been settled satisfactorily, and I am to stand for the borough, and you must come with me at once to help to carry on the canvass."

This announcement took place, after greetings on my arrival, in the drawing-room in Sackville Street; and then explaining matters to Sybil, who had so far heard nothing of the reason for my absence, I produced a copy of the poster which had been sent from the printing-office, wherein the electors of Leatherby were informed in purple letters on a flaming yellow ground that their very faithful and obedient servant, Charles West, presumed to invite their suffrages for the representation of the borough to fill the vacancy caused by the removal of their noble and respected member to the responsibilities of a seat in the Upper House of Parliament. That he could not express his political sentiments

more clearly than by saying that they were generally in accord with those of their esteemed member and fellow-townsmen, Mr. Sheepshanks, and of the great party to whose efforts and measures so much of the prosperity of the country and the manufacturing interests was due. And so forth, according to received practice. Also, that administrative reform would always receive his cordial support, especially such measures as were needed for organising the military forces of the country on a basis of improved efficiency and greater economy. Finally, the candidate stated that, although a comparative stranger himself, he was connected with Leatherby by family ties, and hoped now to become a member of their society in every sense.

The indefatigable Herries accompanied us on our journey the next morning. "I'll see you started properly," he said, "and then you must take your own line for the war-ministership." Mrs. Herries came also to see the fun; and the three ladies, without exactly adopting the costume I had suggested, were yet attired in a manner sufficiently pronounced to denote their connection with the candidate. But any colour would become Eva, or Sybil either; and Mrs. Herries, flushed and happy at being allowed to accompany her husband anywhere, looked handsomer than ever.

But we were not at all prepared for the greeting that awaited us at Leatherby, where, as the train drew up, a discordant clang almost enough to frighten the engine burst forth from the town band, intended to do duty for "See the con-

quering hero comes," but with improvised variations on each instrument. On the platform, set off by a background of a purple and orange banner, stood the candidate's committee:—Mr. Rupert Bowles, his brother, Mr. William Bowles, Mr. Scrap, Mr. Handsaw, Mr. Hunter, Messrs. St. Leger and Gernell, the bankers, Mr. Hambrowe, the wine merchant of Fore Street, Mr. Tawney, the wine merchant of Stampton Street, Messrs. Dyapur and Ruche, the leading drapers, Mr. Staine, the upholsterer, Mr. Prymekut, the leading butcher, and others too numerous to mention. "There can't be anybody to speak of left for a committee on the other side," whispered Herries, "even if they try to get one up." Then as we stepped on to the platform, Mr. Rupert Bowles moved forward, and I shook hands with all the committee, and then introduced them to Eva, who, looking very pretty and shy, shook hands all round; and then Sybil, also looking very pretty and shy, shook hands all round too, while a select deputation of small boys, who had managed to get on to the platform, cried Hooray! and were immediately chased off by the one policeman. Outside the station we found Mrs. Scrap in her pony-carriage, herself and the ponies ablaze with orange ribbons, and Eva was invited to take the vacant seat, while Sybil and Mrs. Herries were assisted into the Three Butts fly, which awaited us with the Fergusson mare and her companion similarly decorated. The whole distance from the station to the Three Butts being rather less than a quarter of a mile, the ladies would fain have walked up after us, but it was represented that this would mar the effect; whereas however it was intended that the carriages should drive on and pull up with a splash at the Three Butts, thus announcing our advent, it happened that the procession was formed

and in motion before the ladies were ready to start, and the street being somewhat narrow the carriages were unable to pass, and so brought up the rear of our procession, to wit:—

A purple banner with orange streamers, borne by two men.

Band of seven performers, all performing vigorously and independently, supported by juvenile attendants on either side.

Two youths carrying flags.

The candidate, arm-in-arm with Messrs. Rupert Bowles and Scrap.

Mr. Herries, on the same friendly terms with Messrs. William Bowles and Hunter.

The rest of the committee.

Various residents of the borough, for the most part disqualified for exercise of the franchise by reason of their tender age.

Mrs. Scrap's pony-phæton.

The Three Butts fly.

The whole effect must have been inexpressibly ludicrous, but I could not venture to look round. From various houses streamers were suspended, useful rather as indicating the proclivities of the owners than remarkable for size or as works of design; but from the second floor of Messrs. Dyapur and Ruche's establishment which faced the inn just at the entrance into the Fore Street, and at its widest part, quite a balloon of coloured calico floated out in the air. "You see, Captain," said Mr. Dyapur, when the procession stopped, "you didn't give us much time for preparation, but we've done our best." I was just going to observe that I hoped it would wash, when the idea suddenly struck me that perhaps this was one of the items to be included in the election bill, and that utilitarian questions of this sort would be held to savour of meanness unworthy of a right-thinking candidate, so I held my peace.

At the open windows of the Three Butts, in the rooms which

nad been engaged for us, were to be seen both the two Mrs. Bowles and other ladies, all more or less in a glory of orange and purple. There must have been quite a run on Messrs. Dyapur's stock that morning. Miss Barton, too, we were told, was waiting within, but would not appear. The ladies here stopped, while the procession continued its way to the public rooms, where a meeting was held, Mr. Sheepshanks in the chair, consisting of about a hundred people, and where I was introduced to the electors or such of them as were present, and proposed by Mr. Scrap, and seconded by Mr. Dyapur. I had of course to make a speech, and very nervous I felt at starting lest I should break down on this first occasion. Luckily the excitement and movement had prevented my thinking too much about it beforehand, and I got through the affair well enough. There was plenty to be said, and I had not to beat about for topics; and although probably the speech was jerky and inartistic, still it was well received, and its success gave me confidence for the future. I had accomplished the feat of speaking on my legs and without premeditation. There was plenty more of this to be done before the election was over, especially open-air speaking; and it appeared to me that there were two leading principles which if acted on were always successful—namely, to be free and jocular in the smaller meetings, where the audience consisted mainly of the local tradesmen, but in the open-air assemblies of operatives to be extremely polite and deferential. I commend this method to all intending candidates.

The meeting was followed by a public banquet for the Liberal party at the Three Butts—three-and-six-pence a-head, wine and spirits not included—which was perhaps the greatest infliction undergone during the canvass. Such an afternoon's

work did not conduce to hunger; about twice as many people were stuffed into the room as it could properly hold, and several of my worthy supporters took the opportunity of the jollification to make a regular night of it, sending for pipes and tobacco, and standing glasses round in succession, till the atmosphere of smoke and gin became almost insupportable. The eating began at five, and was over before the autumn twilight had faded away, soon after which Mr. Sheepshanks retired; but it was near midnight when I managed to get away, a select party remaining to the last, whose encouraging prophecies of the result of the election followed me almost out of the room. "We'll carry you through, Captain," said one jolly farmer, who in virtue of being also a butcher had a shop and a borough vote, as he stood in front of the door waving his pipe with one hand, and holding on to the wainscot with the other to steady himself; "and don't you be afeard of this talk about Squire Drew. He ain't no good for 'lectioneering; he'll never a-bring hisself to making free with his coin. He's that close he couldn't screw hisself to do it. I don't mind a-saying it, though I do rent a bit of his land; I don't care a brass farden about him, I don't, and if I meets him this here very night, I'll say it to his face, just I'm a-saying it to you. He is' a mean one, he is, and so I'll tell him if I meets him. Don't you be afeard, Captain, we'll 'lect you right enough; and as for Squire Drew"—but at this point I succeeded in effecting my escape, quite satisfied of my friend's potentiality in his present condition, when he was like a dragon, breathing forth spirits, whatever might happen should he meet the Squire next day, and feeling that the occasion was not propitious for argument about Mr. Drew's personal qualities.

Escaping from the banquet, I went to Church Street, to fetch Eva, and found all the party in the little drawing-room, tired out with sitting up for me so much beyond the hour at which Miss Barton's household was accustomed to retire to rest. I would fain have let Eva stay in this quiet shelter, knowing too that the whole inn must be reeking with the odours of the feast; but this retirement was not admissible under the circumstances, and we had taken a suite of rooms at the Three Butts, comprising, in fact, the first floor. "We so much wanted you and your sweet wife to stay with us at Holly Lodge," Mrs. Scrap had said on our arrival, "and dear Miss Barton can hardly be equal to entertaining such a party, but Mr. Scrap thought it might be inconvenient to you just now to be so far in the country. The country is indeed very charming; but then this country visiting is so fatiguing, the distances are so great. Fancy, Captain West, we are five miles from the next family;" and in truth it was just that distance by the road from Roodeley, Squire Jacob's place, to the gate of Mrs. Scrap's shrubbery, which was situated at the end of South Lane, one of the terminations of Leatherby.

So far our side had had it all their own way, but the opposition were gathering their forces for a

fight. Scarcely had my blue and yellow posters, following close after the news of Lord Stowe's death, astonished the town, when the holders of what they called sound opinions, recovering their surprise, began to marshal their forces. A deputation, it appeared, had gone out to Squire Drew's the very evening of my previous visit, and again early the following day, when they succeeded in overcoming any remaining scruples; and accordingly, the morning after the banquet, when I looked out of my dressing-room window at the Three Butts, there on a hoarding opposite, and side by side with my own, was another large poster, in which their very humble and obedient servant John Drew requested the support of the electors of Leatherby in favour of the only political principles which could appeal to an enlightened and patriotic constituency. However, his committee had not had time to get up their announcement on coloured paper, which circumstance was deemed to confer a moral superiority on my side, especially by the juvenile portion of the population; but very soon an opposition band, adorned with light blue and pink, came down the street, making if possible even more hideous sounds than ours, and arousing poor Eva from her slumbers; and both parties went hard into canvassing.

CHAPTER XVIII.—THE ELECTION.

Mr. Fergusson, as Herries had predicted, did not come forward as an ostensible partisan on Drew's committee, but privately was very active, as became his character, and was indeed the most respectable member of the other side; for the resident gentry, such of them as belonged to the male sex, were generally indifferent about the matter, and the tradespeople could not afford to think dif-

ferently in politics from the factory hands. But of course we were capital friends notwithstanding. "We are quite torn by conflicting emotions," said Miss Kate, when Eva and I paid them an early call. "Of course we should like you to win, on your own account as well as on Eva's; but then, you know, as papa says, one's political principles must be put before everything. Oh,

Captain West! why could you not be on the right side, and then all this bother would never have occurred?" Even the little household in Church Street had its rival factions. "Come along, Sybil," said I, entering the schoolroom; "come and help Eva. We have to go all round the town to-day. You and she have to kiss all the ugly babies, and I have to do the same by the pretty women. Such, I am informed, is the correct programme. But what do I see here, pink and blue rosettes mixed with our noble colours! Can it be that even here too the demon-paw of party obtrudes its venom-fang, as Mr. Rupert Bowles so beautifully expressed it at the meeting yesterday?" I was answered by the entry of Mary Drew into the room, who it appeared had returned from her visit the day before. "We are having a match, you see, Captain West, which can make up rosettes fastest. Sybil is thirty-five against my twenty-six, but then she had a long start. You mustn't join, Eva—two against one would not be fair. Aunt Emily has promised to be neutral, so let Sybil and me fight it out together." "Oh, my dear," replied Eva, who had now followed me into the room, "you needn't be afraid of my helping. I feel as if I could hardly stand already, and I couldn't hold a needle if I tried ever so. This canvassing is capital fun, but dreadfully tiring." "You mustn't let Eva over-fatigue herself," said Mary; "and after all there is no need to take much trouble, for papa says it is all humbug his contesting the election, for he hasn't a chance. Dear me! I ought not to have told you this, but I dare say it is no secret; however, we mean to fight to the death," and so saying the young lady sat down and resumed her occupation of fabricating opposition rosettes.

Eva was happily spared further exertion that morning by the arrival of Mrs. Scrap in her pony-phaeton

to carry her off to spend the day; and the lady further insisted on picking me up in the street later in the morning, while engaged upon my canvass, and driving me down to the great luncheon-party held at Holly Lodge in honour of the Liberal candidate. "Your wife is the same sweet little thing as ever," said Mrs. Scrap, a comely little woman, with sharp features and an eager face, as we drove along. "I have always been so fond of her, and I was saying to Missie" (Missie was the eldest Miss Scrap, *et. fifteen*) "only this morning what an acquisition she would be to our Leatherby society; for although, of course, one looks mainly to the county for one's company, still in Mr. Scrap's position we are obliged to keep on good terms with the townspeople. Indeed," she added, suddenly recollecting, I presume, the existence of the household in Church Street, "there are some most estimable residents in the town, really quite desirable acquaintances, but the double tie makes the claims of society very engrossing. I have often wanted Mr. Scrap to give up Holly Lodge and move somewhere farther into the country; but business is business, you know, Captain West—one is obliged to think of these things." I might have replied that Mrs. West was at least four inches taller than herself, but I understood her expression to be meant rather in a moral than a physical sense, and that my wife was regarded for the present as somebody to be half patronised and half looked up to and made much of. During the luncheon, which was a very long affair, the room being full of guests, including various carriage company as well as townsfolk—Mrs. Scrap was particular in notifying for my information that the former kept *their* carriages, apparently to prevent it being supposed that they kept the carriages of anybody else—our host-

ess was too preoccupied and anxious for conversation, and her comely face grew flushed as the courses went by, in consumption of the good things provided, and in pressing them on the guests. "Mr. Jacob, you have really eaten nothing. Do try a little of that cream." "Have just had some, ma'am," said the burly squire addressed; "it is first-rate; I think you must have made it yourself." "Oh! Mr. Jacob," said the lady, "what an idea! as if I had the least notion about cooking." "Must have forgotten, then," grunted the squire, who seemed put out at something, in an undertone, and in truth rumour had it that Mrs. Scrap's mother sold butter and eggs in Leatherby market at the time when Mr. Scrap, a young and struggling attorney, was caught by her pretty face; and certainly there remained two maiden sisters who lived in a humble little cottage at the other end of the town, and whose existence there Mrs. Scrap was supposed to regard as a standing grievance. Various schemes for deporting them had been proposed, it was said, but this was probably mere ill-natured scandal. Eventually, as the eating came to an end, Mrs. Scrap found time to offer her kindly advice about our future plans. She was so glad to hear that we meant to settle at Leatherby; for although they all liked Lord Wraymouth very much, still it would be so nice to have the second member resident: dear good Mr. Sheepshanks was a most estimable person, still he could not be said to do much for society, and dear Miss Sheepshanks had not been brought up to that sort of thing. Mrs. West, of course, would entertain, and no doubt her parties would be charming, although she (Mrs. Scrap) could assure me that these pleasures were not without their anxieties, which, indeed, having observed my hostess's face dur-

ing the meal, and the frowns at and whisperings to the servants, I could well understand. But then dear Mrs. West had not any family cares at present to oppress her. What with Missie's education and the younger ones, and Johnnie, really it was an anxious task. She hardly knew what to do about Missie's music—the child had so much taste it would be a thousand pities not to cultivate it, wouldn't it? And although Dr. Phewgew was no doubt a very sound musician, still he had not the style of a London master. She really must get Mr. Scrap to let her take Missie to town next year for the season to finish her education. And then she should hope to see a great deal of dear Mrs. West. Then there was Johnnie. I had not seen Johnnie yet; he had just gone back to school; she was so sorry she had not been able to introduce him to me. He was such a noble boy. Yes, she believed the Leatherby school was very well, and Johnnie went there when he was a little fellow, but the society was very miscellaneous, so many of the trades-people sent their sons there, which made it very awkward, I knew, and so it was better he should go to Harrow. She would have preferred sending him to Eton, but Harrow was quite as expensive, and Mr. Sheepshanks's grandson, young Cramer, was at Harrow, and the two boys were such friends. What form was he in? Well, he was not quite sure what form he was in, but thought it was the fifth, or it might be the fourth form; at any rate his tutor wrote home excellent accounts of him, and said there was not a more gentlemanly boy in his house. Young Lord Lolly Poppe was in the same house, second son of the Marquis of Jinjerbrede—such a gentlemanly youth. Should I find it difficult to get a place to settle down in? Well, Mr. Scrap

would be only too happy to help me to look out for something; they had found it very difficult, but then they wanted so much; and when at last Mr. Scrap bought Holly Lodge, it was such a tumble-down place that she told him she really thought they could not live in it; but by building out a new drawing-room and two best bed-rooms, and adding a conservatory, and turning the old drawing-room into a school-room, and converting the attics into nurseries, they had managed to make it do. "But then, you know, Captain West, you have no nurseries or governess to provide for, have you? But won't you come now and look at the conservatory?"

Thus it will be seen that everybody seemed to take my election for granted; nevertheless the business went on as if the election were to be hotly contested; and what between speeches out of window, and speeches in the public rooms, and committee meetings, and the work of personal canvassing, there was enough to be done. I cannot say I found the personal canvass at all disagreeable. The minor tradesmen, indeed, between a sort of natural obsequiousness and the independence simulated for the occasion, were not very easy to get on with; I always felt when calling on them as if we both understood that this political talk was all humbug at bottom, and that real business would have consisted in a handsome order for tobacco, or shoes, or almonds and raisins, or whatever the article on hand might be; and this one could not do just at present for certain considerations. I confess, too, I should have been better pleased if the leading committee-men had put me through my facings, so to speak, before taking up my cause so heartily, instead of letting it be seen so plainly that I was adopted merely as Mr. Sheepshanks's nominee, and not

on the score of any personal merit. But one must not look a gift horse in the mouth; and I found the operatives thoroughly pleasant fellows to talk to, independent yet civil, and although full of prejudice and disposed to be over-conceited about their knowledge, yet intelligent and shrewd withal. I gave no pledges and asked for no promises, but made no secret of my opinions; and I must say I found the arguments one used to get into with some of these good fellows very useful for fixing my own ideas, as well as for the new light in which they presented things; while they for their part appeared both surprised and gratified to find a soldier thinking the army might be more efficient and yet cheaper. Their wives, too, were a civil but apparently thriftless set, who seemed to understand thoroughly the art of making a little money go a very short way, and spent without much to show for it enough to keep a poor gentleman in comfort. There used to be a certain amount of looking round from behind back-doors, accompanied by sniggering, on the part of the numerous young ladies dwelling in these parts who were employed as factory hands, and they seemed hardly to know whether to be civil or saucy to Eva when she accompanied me on my rounds; but on the whole I liked what I saw of the people, and we became very good friends. Eva and Sybil began very actively with the canvassing at first, but the former was soon obliged to give up the work from fatigue; for so long as she held out, her gracious presence, as she walked down these back streets like a gentle, modest queen, had a very good effect. Sybil was a less useful ally, perhaps, as people were accustomed to see her going about in the school-girl state.

Meanwhile the two committees carried on the war, and various

squibs, as well as addresses, soon decorated the available wall space, of a style quite adapted to the mental calibre of the readers to be edited. I remember one in particular, notifying that the celebrated West Indian juggler (the West in italics, of course), would have the honour of exhibiting his tricks to the Leatherby public, including his remarkable personation of the character of a Liberal (also in italics) country gentleman; and how, finally, this juggler would conclude his entertainment by vanishing just before the polling-day. Whereupon our side came out with a report of the meeting of the Stampton Agricultural Benevolent Society, Squire Screw in the chair, when half-a-crown and a new smock was presented to John Hodge, for having brought up a family of fifteen children without aid from the parish. Also a notice to the effect that Squire Screw had announced his intention of subscribing half-a-sovereign to be divided between the Leatherby Infirmary and the Literary and Scientific Institution. What wag composed these *jeux d'esprit* I do not know, and I declare they were posted up without my sanction. We had most of them defaced, but they appear to have been much relished by the community, and were pronounced more telling, if less witty, than the opposition devices.

Happily the principals on either side bore the attacks good-humouredly, and we continued to be capital friends. "Here, at any rate, is neutral ground," said a voice from the corner of Miss Barton's drawing-room, as I entered it one evening towards dusk, and dimly discerned Drew sitting there with the ladies; "we can meet here at any rate without exchanging haughty salutations, as we have to do in the streets; only it would never do to let our committees know anything about it. Mine would set me down as a

traitor for certain, and I daresay yours would too. What a joke it is, to be sure, at least for me! I knew I hadn't a ghost of a chance, and my committee knew it too; but for goodness' sake don't let them know I said so. I must carry on a bit longer for the look of the thing, but it will be no good holding out much more."

"For shame, papa," said his daughter, "to be so downhearted; you ought not to encourage Captain West in that way. For my part, I think we have a capital chance, and Mr. Fergusson was in great spirits about it this morning."

"Fergusson was only humbugging you, girls; he knows all about it really. But appearances must be kept up. See me out of doors, and I can swagger with any of them; but I am not telling Captain West any secrets. He knows how the land lies just as well as I do, and there is no use in playing at hoax in here."

"Well, papa, all I can say is, it's a great shame. I don't feel so very sorry on your account, because I know you would be miserable in London; but it would be so nice for you to have been an M.P. just for once. Besides, of course, we wanted the good cause to triumph. If Captain West had only belonged to the right side!—oh, dear! what a pity it is! Mr. Fergusson was saying he never could have supposed you were such a Radical, Captain West. I suppose he never said anything about it to you, Eva, did he, before you were married?"

"My dear, I knew nothing about Tories or Radicals in those days, and I don't know much more about them now; but I wish Charlie could be an M.P. without going into Parliament. It's very nice being an M.P., I daresay; but how anybody can like going to Parliament, I am sure I can't think. We went there one evening, and you ought to have seen the place they put us into.

And oh! such tiresome stuff as they talked!"

Mr. Drew had not at all understood his chance of success. There really was no effectual opposition; and almost before the writ came down for the election, a placard appeared in which, while thanking his many friends for the generous support they had accorded, he considered that the present condition of the Conservative interests in the borough did not justify his proceeding to the poll; and therefore, while hinting darkly that on the next occasion they would have an overwhelming majority on their side, he would for the present withdraw from the contest. It was very foolish, he afterwards remarked to me, to allow himself to be persuaded into coming forward at all. They need not try it again. "Didn't like to put his hand in his pocket," said Mr. Rupert Bowles, when discussing the matter in committee;

"Drew's an awful close fellow." "He's fond of money is Drew," replied his brother; "but he can spend it too sometimes. Look at that right-of-way case of his which he lost at the Yewcester assizes, with special jury and the Attorney-General got down special, and then fought out in the Queen's Bench. It must have cost him a precious lot before he had done with it. But Drew don't like throwing money away any more than most folks, and that's what he was doing here. He wouldn't have polled a couple of hundred votes. He didn't pull up a bit too soon, to my thinking."

Anyhow, the result was, that on Drew's retirement no one else was found bold enough to take up his place; and in a few days I found myself returned unopposed, with but a very moderate bill to pay, and no doubts of imputations or petitions in reserve to qualify the full pleasure of success.

CHAPTER XIX.—PROFESSIONAL.

There still remained four weary months to wait before entering on my new functions; for although Parliament stood prorogued till November, it was well understood there would be no meeting till February. The young lady looking forward to her first ball, the youngster awaiting the arrival of his first uniform, the little boy counting the days remaining to the holidays in his first half at school; all who have gone through the like experiences can enter into my feelings and state of foolish expectancy. Not that there was any illusion about the matter. I had seen enough from the Speaker's gallery to know what a humdrum affair Parliamentary life was; that by far the larger number of the members took no active part in the proceed-

ings, and that to lay yourself out to be a working member involved weary and dreary hours of waiting about. I could picture to myself quite clearly beforehand just what would happen; how I should probably be very assiduous in attendance at first, and how my zeal would gradually abate, and how when at last an opportunity should come for an utterance, the result would be of such a commonplace sort, neither failure nor success, that I should be tempted to give up my plan in disgust as not worth all the sacrifice of time and trouble; or how, if I determined to go on, it would be with a full knowledge of the dull, plodding life that awaited me, and the awful consumption of time required to produce even a moderate success; time that, given to any other pur-

suit, might bring at least the solid advantage of self-satisfaction, if not the higher meed of fame.

There were no illusions therefore in my case. The days of heaven-born prime ministers, or even of Sheridans and Cannings, were gone by. Cabinet ministers were nowadays mostly grey-headed men who had gone through a lot of subordinate drudgery; and I looked forward to a thoroughly dull prosaic existence, such as I felt certain it would prove to be even if I were successful. Nevertheless my eagerness to begin was as keen, and my inner feelings as restless, as if the prospect had been one of undiluted social bliss. However, restlessness would not make February come a bit the sooner. The time had to be got through somehow, and it could not be better spent than in making secure the seat which good fortune had brought me so easily. Clearly we should do well to spend the winter at Leatherby and endeavour to make ourselves popular for our own sakes. And another piece of luck awaited us, for a suitable house became available just when it was wanted. Mrs. Scrap called early one morning in Church Street, whither we had now moved, to tell us that Mr. Scrap had just received instructions from the Misses Harington to let their place for the winter, those elderly ladies having been advised to visit the south of France; and accordingly in a day or two we found ourselves tenants of Dingwell, a comfortable but unromantic-looking house about a mile out of the town, with a prim garden, three or four acres of ground, an eminently respectable and plethoric butler of whom Eva from the first was thoroughly afraid, an equally respectable and venerable housemaid, a ditto cook, a cross gardener, a stolid coachman, and two fat horses drawing a chariot in which the Misses Harington were

wont three times a-week to take so much of the air as found its way through the little windows, above which those ladies' noses could just be seen; two cows, an apoplectic spaniel accustomed also to take exercise in the chariot, and a splendid Persian cat. It must have cost the sisters a pang to part with these treasures, still more to make them over to the care of strangers; but, on the other hand, it was a great object to the owners to find tenants prepared to take over the establishment as it stood; and when, on our calling to see the place, the Persian cat after brief negotiations jumped straightway into Eva's lap, Miss Harington pronounced that the arrangement was clearly providential, and Mr. Scrap had little difficulty in completing the transfer. We for our part could have preferred a lighter equipage, and generally a more cheerful household; but it was of course a great advantage to find one ready organised, and available for just the time we wanted to occupy it. Accordingly there remained nothing to be done but to order the butler to obtain supplies as usual, thus in effect retaining that domestic tyrant in command; and we entered into possession, merely allowing a decent interval to elapse after the departure of our landladies on their tour. Meanwhile I took the opportunity to run up to town for a day or two on schedule business, first, however, performing one of the functions of my new office. The day after my return was announced, I received a note from the grammar school, in which honourable and dear sir was requested in conformity with the ancient usage of this loyal borough to obtain a whole holiday for the boys of this ancient foundation. This appeal, which was written in a fine round hand with splendid flourishes in Mr. Aborn the writing-master's best style, was

signed Thomas Provest, head-monitor, and William Dyapur, captain of the eleven; and on receiving it I went straightway down to the school, and being met at the lodge by the porter, that official donned an old blue gown, and conducting me across the green to the school-house, went in and announced my arrival; whereupon, following the order prescribed by tradition, the two signitaries to the note came out and conducted me to the head-master, who occupied a sort of pulpit at the end of the schoolroom,—the boys being ranged on forms on either side,—after shaking hands with whom, I requested, according to the ancient privilege accorded to a newly elected member, a whole holiday for the school. This request the head-master, who wore his college cap all the time, such it appeared being part of the traditionary ceremony, was pleased generously to assent to; whereupon the boys, notwithstanding that unlike their parents they were all stout Conservatives, sinking politics for the moment, gave three cheers for the new member. I was then introduced to the under-master; the mathematical master (late scholar of Mary Anne Hall, Cambridge, and graduate in mathematical honours; so ran the prospectus, I afterwards heard that he was twenty-ninth junior optime); the French master; and Eva's little friend Mr. Aborn the writing-master; and the ceremony concluded by my tipping the signitaries to the letter a guinea each, and subscribing five pounds to the school athletic sports. Five would go seven hundred times into three thousand five hundred, as I told Eva afterwards, a number which in those days seemed practically infinite.

During my visit to town Eva remained with her aunt. I found that the schedule was still in course of preparation, the court of probate

being apparently in no hurry to conclude the affair, and I felt under too great an obligation to my kind friend to urge him to go faster than his wont, while my discreditable anxiety was long ago allayed about any disappearance westward. The American voyage would evidently be made only by his partner, and indeed Herries was now on the point of making a second visit to New York. The firm it appeared were London agents to the great New York and Mexico Railway Company, which gave them an immensity of American business. Before setting off, however, he carried out his promise of giving me a start in the city, which my new position greatly assisted. The name of Captain West, M.P., now appeared on the direction of the Metropolitan and Provincial Bank, and the Agricultural and Commercial Assurance Company; and I took my seat while in town at the board meetings of each, looking properly grave and maintaining solemn silence till I should get into the swing of the business. Both were deemed to be first-class affairs in which I was now a considerable shareholder, and the chairman of the Metropolitan and Provincial was a great financial authority, and a bank director as well as a county member. Our proceedings at the board of the Company appeared to consist mainly in sitting round a long table while the applicants for policies presented themselves in turn before us. Each applicant took a seat by the chairman for a couple of minutes, who put a few jocular questions to him, after which the insurer made his bow and retired, and the proposal papers with our medical officer's opinion were passed around for opinion. This system of requiring personal interviews, I found, was considered the strong point of the Agricultural and Commercial; for

whereas in other companies a man could take out a policy after being seen merely by the secretary and medical officer, no one could insure with us without first appearing before the whole board. This, as our prospectus pointed out, afforded a peculiar guarantee to the shareholders for the soundness of the business done; and clearly a machinery of this sort was admirably adapted for detecting bad lives which might impose on our doctor. The board of the Metropolitan and Provincial was a smaller affair, consisting of six members with the managing director and chairman. The secretary produced a bundle of flimsy papers and a list of discounts made during the week, whereon the managing director, running his fingers through them jauntily, like a conjuror playing with a pack of cards, said, "all quite first-class paper you see, gentlemen," and we all replied "quite so," except one man of independent mind who said "evidently;" and then there was a ticking off of vouchers, and reading the minutes of the last meeting, and we broke up. For these exertions the Agricultural paid us each a fee of two guineas, and the bank two and a half. "Looks well, to be on first-class directions of this kind," said Herries that evening, as he took his farewell dinner in Sackville Street preparatory to starting for Liverpool, "and pays your travelling expenses into the bargain," as indeed it did, for a first-class return ticket to Leatherby was only thirty-seven and sixpence.

It was pleasant also to walk into the Union Jack, of which popular establishment I had lately been elected a member, and receive the congratulations of friends and acquaintances. "Holloa! old West," cried Cobbe Smith of my regiment, "so you've been and gone and got to Parliament! I congratulate

you, my boy. Here's Julian Straight somewhere in the house, and Murphy and little Gatlay; we are all going to dine together; come and join us; and we will have some champagne cooled and drink your health."

"By Jove, West, what a lucky fellow you are!" said Straight as we settled down to dinner; "an uncle died and left you a hatful of money, isn't it? Dash it, I wish one of my uncles would die and leave me something. But no such luck."

"Well, West," said Cobbe Smith, "you must stick up for the old regiment in Parliament; we shall look to get a lot out of you, mind; you ought to be good for another brigade at least. Not that I want promotion myself, for I wouldn't lose my troop for anything. Rather be as I am, than a field-officer, any day."

"You may say that, indeed," said Straight. "Look at me. Here have I been, subaltern and captain, seventeen years in the horse artillery, and am now shunted off on promotion to a garrison brigade. And a nice brigade it is, too, one battery at Mahrattapoor, one at Seringapatam, and two at Ormuz, and they won't muster together, all told, the strength of my old horse battery. That was something like a command. But it's just like my luck."

"And which of all these stations are you posted to?"

"I am down for Mahrattapoor; but as they have a colonel and lieutenant-colonel there already I shall hardly be wanted. Two field-officers are about enough to look after one garrison battery. There is a lieutenant-colonel at Seringapatam also, and the other colonel has to be provided for; he is on leave just now. I suppose I shall have to go to Ormuz, and play second fiddle to that duffer Jones. However, there won't be much to do. Jones won't want me to help him in meddling

with the captain of the one battery there. I shall be able to get six months' leave every year, that's something."

"Well, Murphy," said Cobbe Smith, "what are they going to do with the regiment, and when are they going to do it? When is this long-incubated scheme of reorganisation coming off? Give us your confidence, like a trustworthy War Office official as you are. We are badly in want of a shave or two down at Aldershot."

"It is very easy to talk in that glib way, my good sir; but matters of this sort are not so easily settled. This is a large question, this reorganisation. However, there's a committee sitting on it now, and our report, I expect, will go in very soon."

"That makes the twentieth committee at the very least, to my knowledge," said Cobbe Smith, "and there will be twenty more yet, I'll be bound; and at the end of it we shall all be very much where we are now, I expect. We have got a few efficient batteries, and that is about the whole of it."

"It is very easy to talk, young man, but it's a different thing when you come to deal with the thing practically. You will find, however, that this last committee has dealt with the subject exhaustively. Not that I agree with them altogether. Indeed, I have put a paper of my own before the Secretary of State, which he has had under consideration since last May, and which I hope he may take up. I have looked at the thing from every point of view, and the conclusion I come to is, that you must make the battery your administrative unit."

"And do away with the brigade system altogether?"

"Certainly; what good are these brigades?"

"Then you would have two hun-

dred and fifty batteries all working separately, and nothing between them and the Horse—well, between them and Colonel Murphy?"

"No, not quite that. You would have field-officers commanding stations, of course, and district-adjutants, and so forth, but the regimental records would be kept at headquarters, and there would be one general roster by batteries through the regiment for foreign service."

"Certainly your scheme would be a triumph of decentralisation. I conclude that, of course, you would number the batteries in one list right down through the regiment? Number 250 R. A. would look neat on a man's shoulder-strap; it would be so easy to remember, too."

"No, there would not be one general number, because the horse batteries would be numbered separately from the rest."

"The best plan to my mind," said Gatlay, "would be to have three or four great artillery divisions, say one at Woolwich, another at Plymouth, and so on, with permanent headquarters for each."

"What would you gain by that?"

"Why, for one thing it would be a less centralised plan than having only one headquarters for the whole regiment. It seems to answer very well for the marines."

"Do you mean that these divisions should be made up of separate branches, one of garrison, one of field artillery, and one of home artillery? or is each division to have its share of the three branches?"

"Each division would be complete in the three kinds. The change would be simply in having four artillery regiments instead of one. This would surely be a more compact and handy organisation than the present one."

"For my part," said Straight, "I think if you go in for changes

of this sort, you ought to make the horse artillery a distinct service from the rest. At present you may get fellows posted to it as field-officers who have scarcely done a day's duty with it before. Men with no style, who have forgotten how to ride perhaps. Plays the very deuce with the horse artillery, that sort of thing does."

"At any rate that practice gives the garrison brigades the inestimable benefit of the occasional presence of a horse artillery officer, as in your case, Straight."

"And I hope the horse artillery will have the same benefit too, soon, by getting me back again."

"But why should there be an artillery regiment at all?" asked Cobbe Smith.

"What! an army without artillery?"

"I don't mean that exactly. But why should all the artillery be in one regiment any more than all the cavalry or all the infantry?"

"Break up the old regiment?" cried Straight. "Oh, confound it, man, you couldn't do that! Oh, dash it, no! you must keep the old regiment together. Whatever you do, you must do that."

"Where's the necessity?"

"Why you would break down all our *esprit de corps* altogether if you were to split us up into different regiments. Oh, confound it, man, it would never do to break up the old regiment!"

"Well, but this old regiment, as you call it, has after all been joined together for only about ten years. And as to the *esprit de corps*, does it depend on our being all promoted on one seniority list? And where are the signs of that close bond of brotherhood among your sixteen hundred brother officers that you speak of? Do you yourself, Straight, know even a tenth of them personally?"

"I should rather think not," said Straight, drawing himself up, and pulling his mustache, "nor yet a twentieth, and don't want to." Straight was by way of being a swell both regimental and otherwise, and perhaps would hardly have cared to dine at the Union Jack with a second captain if he had not been also an M.P. As for Colonel Murphy, he could be quite affable with his brother officers when on business, or if there was no better company available, and this being October the Club was empty; at other times a regimental party of this sort would hardly have been in his line, for it was quite understood by the regiment that he moved in a superior circle, as became a distinguished official and man about town.

"Well, then," continued Cobbe Smith, "I fail to perceive the force of your objection, Straight; and it seems to me that common-sense points to the need for dealing with our regiment as you would with any other branch of the service. Why should you not have fifteen or twenty artillery regiments of a handy, manageable size, just as you have regiments of cavalry and infantry?"

"Ah! but the case is very different," observed Murphy; "you don't want to have entire regiments of artillery stationed at different places. You must have your batteries scattered about. A regimental system such as you propose would never work."

"But are not the other branches of the service scattered about too? How many regiments of cavalry are there serving at home which are not distributed by detachments? Yet we don't find that the regimental system fails to work with them."

"Yes; but then the artillery is a different service altogether. Besides, you would have all sorts of irregularities and differences creeping into

the drill and system. You must have uniformity in the artillery."

"And that you think would be secured by organising the regiment as a congeries of independent batteries?"

"Not by the independent batteries, but by having one centre of administration and one headquarters. If you had separate regiments they would be wanting to have different equipments, and then differences in drill and system would be sure to arise. No, depend on it, if you are to maintain uniformity in your artillery, you must keep it as one regiment."

"Yet we don't find the infantry and cavalry breaking out in different patterns of rifles and sabres, because they are divided off. If you serve out only one kind of gun and one kind of shell to the artillery they will have to use it; and as for uniformity of system, you may secure that by proper inspections."

"But if you had separate regiments," broke in Straight, "you might have a man promoted before you who came out of Woolwich below you. That would never do."

"Why shouldn't it? In the other branches of the service men don't continue through life to stand in the order of their first commissions. And it is considered quite lawful for the artillery to supersede the engineers who beat them at the Academy. After all, the chances of good luck would be the same for everybody. You might be one of the lucky ones yourself, Straight."

"Oh, don't talk to me about luck, my dear fellow. Just fancy, if I had been a captain in the Crimea, instead of being just at the top of the lieutenants, I should have got my brevet majority to a certainty, or I landed a week before the place

fell; and I should have been sure of my lieutenant-colonelcy and C. B. for India, and should have been a brevet colonel years ago, and very likely a brigadier-general at this moment; and here I am a bare regimental lieutenant-colonel, and not even a battery to command. There never was such luck."

"I'll tell you what, West," said Murphy in an undertone, "now that you have got into Parliament you may possibly have something to say to the settlement of these matters. I dare say they will put you on to any select committee that may be appointed about the regiment. I should like you to read my memorandum on the subject. I will send it you to-morrow, and I should be glad to talk the matter over with you any time that you care to look in at the office."

Murphy, it appeared to me, behaved during this little party like a man of the world who was prepared to recognise the altered relations produced by a seat in the House of Commons, however much such a distinction might jar against his sense of the innate fitness of things. Straight, on the other hand, seemed to regard my good fortune as a sort of personal grievance, second only to his transfer to the foot artillery, or any scheme for the disruption of the old regiment. But at this point of the conversation, the former desisted. Lord Kewrasse of the household cavalry coming into the coffee-room, and rose at once to engage that popular young officer in conversation. As Straight did not know Lord Kewrasse, and did not apparently relish Murphy's desertion, he pleaded an engagement and moved off too, and Cobbe Smith and myself adjourned to the smoking-room.

CHAPTER XX.—A MODEL M.P.

Returning to Leatherby, Eva and I moved into our new residence, and I went to work to drown in occupation the impatient longing I felt for the consummation of my new position. The intervening three months and a fraction would clearly be best spent by fulfilling in a proper manner the new rôle of borough member, and this accordingly I set about doing vigorously. The first thing was to subscribe liberally to the Leatherby Hunt, and to join in that pastime; and I got down a couple of lively nags on job from town, also a pony and little carriage for Eva, which made her independent on fine days of the chariot, so that this ancient vehicle could be reserved mainly for taking us out to dinner-parties, or for conveying her aunts to and fro when they came out to see us. As for the hunting, it was passable enough, but I confess I did not take to it very kindly. The meet was well enough, especially as Eva would sometimes drive me there, or sometimes ride to see the hounds throw off, and the run was splendid fun when we had one, although the Yewcestershire country was not good; but the concomitants, to my thinking, outweighed the pleasure. To find yourselves at the end of a December day eighteen or twenty miles from home, on a tired horse, was about as dreary a prospect as could be conceived. Some people can think on horseback, and so pass the time agreeably; I never could. I can think with a pen in my hand, or in a railway train, the motion of which, I think, produces a sort of exaltation of the brain. Many a fine debate have I carried on when going down in the Leatherby express, putting, of course, sophistical argument of the feeblest kind into

the mouths of my opponents, and then exposing them in terse and forcible speeches; but when riding home from hunting I never could do anything but look forward to the milestones when it was light enough to see them, or else peer out into the gloom for any visible marks to indicate my progress homewards. Nor were the dinner-parties much better; the Miss Haringtons' horses being good for about seven miles an hour, and the visiting distances enormous, a considerable part of our winter nights seemed to be spent in plodding over the Yewcestershire lanes in the yellow chariot, which had not done so much service for years.

Then there was the town business. I had been nominated joint-patron with Mr. Sheepshanks of the Leatherby Literary and Scientific Institution, and took the chair on various occasions—it was understood, that my colleague was to be deemed exempt from all petty work of this kind—notably when Mr. R. Podger Bowles gave his elegant lecture on Rome, entitled "Recreations of an Overworked Official," a lecture delivered by the young Treasury swell with great self-possession to a crowded and attentive audience, the great hall of the Institution which holds nearly a hundred people being full to overflowing, and all the young ladies of Leatherby in the front rows in their best bonnets; and again when young Harry Perkins read his Essay on the Genius of Modern Poesy. Mrs. Scrap, next to whom I had the honour of sitting on this last occasion, remarked that it was really quite gratifying to see how well Mrs. Perkins, who was a most respectable person, had brought up her son, and that the spread of education among all classes of people

was a remarkable sign of the age. We supped afterwards at the Fergussons', and the only unkindly thing I ever noticed in that family was that scarcely any allusion was made to the lecture, although Harry Perkins was evidently longing to hear something said about it; so that I was glad to feel in a position as late chairman and present member to rise at the table and propose the health of our able essayist, leading off three cheers with effusion, which ceremony made the poor lad quite happy for the rest of the evening, and I doubt not converted him into a fast friend. Politically Harry Perkins was my supporter already, although not yet in the enjoyment of the franchise. "The governor, you know, Captain West," he had taken occasion to say one day during the canvass, "is an out-and-outer of the old school, and of course the ladies take on in the same line—women never have any opinions of their own, and it isn't any use talking politics in that house, so I keep my opinions to myself, but I'm quite of your way of thinking, sir. You see, Captain, I don't take things for granted; anatomy and materia medica and that sort of thing makes a man go to the bottom of things. I am Liberal to the backbone, sir."

Thus passed the winter days at Leatherby, Sybil spending by agreement every alternate week with us, and going during her visits three times a-week to her aunts for her French lessons with Miss Jones. Those with little Mr. Aborn the writing-master were suspended for the time, and I fear Sybil's mathematical education thereby stopped short somewhere about compound addition. During the alternate week, when it was Sybil's turn to stay with her aunts, Eva generally managed to secure her company and that of Mary

Drew almost every evening that we were at home, and sometimes Miss Barton herself and even Miss Honoria would be prevailed upon to join the party, on all which occasions the chariot would be put in requisition to convey the fair freight to and fro. Sunday we always spent in Church Street, partaking of Miss Barton's early dinner after the morning service.

At last, when we had completed the round of entertainments provided in our honour, and Christmas was coming on, when Mr. Paterson and Mr. and Mrs. Herries had promised to pay us a visit, I suggested to Eva that as our stay would be short, it behoved us to lose no time in returning these hospitalities, and in fact giving a series of dinner-parties ourselves. "It will give us an opportunity for spending a little money in the town, which we have hardly done sufficiently yet. It struck me Mr. Hambrowe looked at me in the street rather sulkily yesterday, as if he thought the consumption of champagne in this house was quite unbefitting a borough member. I will sit down and order some of his highest brand straightway, and some port and claret from Tawney's; and do you, my pretty one, make out a list of invitations."

"How will this do, Charlie?" said Eva, half an hour later. "I have put down sixteen; that will be enough, I suppose, for the first time."

"Let us see. The Rupert Bowles, Mr. R. Podger Bowles, the William Bowles; isn't that making a family business of it? better get the William Bowles to come another time. The Fergussons—that won't do, dear. Rupert Bowles is about the only man in the place on our list who took Fergusson's opposition to my canvass seriously. Better not bring them together."

"Oh dear me, I forgot all about that; but it does seem such nonsense to bring politics into dinner-parties. Besides I am sure Mr. Fergusson does not think about such things."

"Very likely not, my love, but Rupert Bowles does. Better ask the Fergussons for another day, you will have plenty of opportunities. Well, let us see who else are down. The Bamfylde, three; the St. Legers—good, they will be flattered at meeting county people; Miss Barbour; why, you have left out Mr. Sheepshanks! he may very possibly come just this once to dine with his fellow-member, at any rate we ought to ask him. Then you must not forget that Mr. Paterson and his ward will be here; and of course Sybil will be here that evening, and then there are ourselves. And why, goodness me, you have left out the Scraps! That will never do."

"Must we ask Mrs. Scrap, Charlie?" said Eva hesitatingly.

"If we don't want to convert her into an enemy for life, we must."

"It will quite spoil the evening if she comes. I never feel quite comfortable when she is in the room. She's so——"

"You mean that she is a little disposed to be patronising, and more than disposed to be vulgar. You can't help the vulgarity, and the patronising will adjust itself by-and-by; but Scrap was my most energetic supporter, and Mrs. Scrap did her best, too."

"But you must please tell me what to order for dinner, Charlie; I haven't a notion what is proper."

"Better just have what everybody else has. Side dishes and sweets, and so forth."

"Yes, but I don't know the names of a single one. I never shall understand anything about cookery."

"Well then, ask your aunt to come up and help you to make out a bill of fare."

"Oh, my dear Charlie! Aunt Emily has no more notion about it than I have. She would be sure to suggest minced veal. We used always to have minced veal for dinner whenever Mr. Drew took his luncheon with us. We can't have minced veal for sixteen people, you know."

"Well, not exactly; but suppose we take Johnson and the cook into council. The Miss Haringtons used to give very fair dinners, I believe, —very likely their servants will understand all about it without any help."

The butler and cook proved quite equal to the occasion, and both in their quiet way seemed to relish the excitement of professional employment, so the difficulty was overcome; and as Eva declared she could not write her invitations, because my presence flurried her, I went to my room to write my own letters. Returning to the morning room—half-an-hour afterwards, my little wife was still hard at work on her notes.

"Not done yet, Eva? and what is that little book you have got there?" for with some confusion she had closed a little volume that was on the table, and had covered it with a piece of blotting-paper.

"Nothing that you need see, sir," said she, blushing and trying to convey it to her pocket. "Now, Charlie, don't be so rude; let me alone; for shame, you rude boy," cried Eva, as, after a delightful little struggle, I remained captor of the book.

I had noticed this little book several times before as being constantly in her possession, and fancied it was one of those little devotional manuals which young ladies are sometimes wont to carry

out with them. It turned out to be a pocket edition of Johnson's Dictionary.

"Well," said Eva, with a pretty blush of confusion, as I smiled, looking perhaps a little sarcastic, "how can I help it? You scolded me the other day because I spelt apology with two p's. If I am never to make these mistakes I must hunt up my words sometimes. You are not angry, are you, Charlie?" she added, after a pause.

"Angry! you little thing; what should make you think I was angry?"

"Because you looked so awfully severe. You know I always was stupid, you know, and so I always shall be."

"My darling, pray don't talk like that! To hear you say such things is almost as bad as if I said them myself. Spelling after all, my child, is said to be very much matter of opinion, and the slips even people who call themselves well educated make, not to mention Lord High Commissioners and swells of that sort, are surprising. But, my dear Eva, you can't always be sure of having Johnson in your pocket, and the way to spell is to read. If you don't accustom yourself to the look of words, you will never be able to spell. I have been wanting to say something about this for some time, Eva dear. You see, if you don't ever put anything into that pretty little head, you can't expect much to come out of it."

"But, my dear Charlie, when has there been time for reading? Just look at the life we have been leading! First in London, and then down here, and then in Germany, and then this election, and all the time I have been so tired I could often scarcely stand, much less read. I think you are rather hard upon me, Charlie."

"My dear, I don't say a word

about that time. We were leading a life of bustle, and you were not strong, and there was plenty to be done besides reading. But we have now been settled down here nearly three months, and I really don't think you have opened a book all that time, or even so much as looked at the newspaper."

"Oh, Charlie! you know it is no good wanting me to take an interest about politics; I never could understand anything about them, and never shall. And as for books, I am sure the whole day goes in something or other. The time seems to fly."

"I am glad you don't find it dull, my pretty one, for sometimes I think——"

"Charlie! as if anything could be dull with you. But sometimes I think too——"

"Well, what is it my little woman thinks? Come, Eva, unburden yourself. I see from all this hesitation that something weighs on that little brain."

"Well, Charlie—you won't be angry with me, will you?—don't you think," said Eva, nestling her head on my shoulder, "don't you think it would have been better if you had found out what a stupid little thing I was before you married me?"

"Oh, Eva, Eva! how can you talk in that shocking way? What can have put such horrid notions into your head? What have I said to make you in such a taking?" For the large tears were beginning to drop on my coat, although she was trying to conceal them.

"It isn't what you say, Charlie," she replied between her bursts of sobbing, "but you look so vexed very often when I say something silly—I know I am a little goose, but I can't help it. We can't be different from what we are, can we? No, Charlie; you should have

thought of this before you married me."

"Good heavens! Eva, what can I have been looking like that you should be conjuring up all these horrid doubts? Will you believe me, dear, that all these fancies are wholly out of your own imagination? And whatever we do," I added, when she became a little calmer, "don't let us get into the way of talking about what we might have done. That is not a healthy kind of retrospect for man and wife to indulge in, depend on it. But this comes on me like a revelation, Eva. Here was I fancying that I was making you happy; and you all the time building up this fabric of imaginary troubles. It is all my fault, I have no doubt; I suppose I must have been behaving like a brute, for you to be so put out, but I did not mean to be."

"No, no, Charlie, don't say that; it's all my fault. But you do look so dreadfully grave sometimes, you quite frighten me, when I say something silly. I know I am very stupid and ignorant, but we can't make ourselves different to what we are."

"But, my dear Eva, after all, we need not always stand still in these things. Our education need not come to an end as soon as one grows up. And although you, dear, are a married lady, after all you are not nineteen yet, so there is plenty of time for learning and wisdom too, in addition to beauty."

"Oh no, Charlie, it's no good talking about these things. I suppose I must have a pretty face, because you are always saying so, but I shall never be clever and learned and that sort of thing. You must be satisfied to take me as you find me."

"My darling, I wish I knew how to cure you of this false impression! I won't be such a prig as to say that I am more than satisfied to have

you as you are, because that would be putting the matter on quite a wrong footing, and making matters worse. But what shall I say to put you at ease? When I feel that it is I who ought to apologise, when I wonder how a sweet young creature like you, who might have had all the world at your feet, came to choose such an ugly old fellow as me for a husband."

"Now, Charlie, you are laughing at me."

"There it is again! What can I have done to drive you into this state of self-abasement, Eva? What can I do to make you see things in their true light, to make you feel that you have no right to put me up on a pedestal above you in this way? Any one who knows us—Mr. Paterson, or the Fergussons, or any one else—would say at once, if they spoke candidly, that it is I who am the lucky one, and have got the best of the bargain."

"Then they would say wrong. Mr. Patterson is a dear old flatterer, I know, and the Fergussons are such old friends; but they can't help my being a stupid little thing."

Here our conversation was interrupted by the sound of the chariot-wheels announcing that Aunt Emily and Sybil were coming to spend the day. And it seemed soon as if the little cloud had passed away; but, alas! the first words of difference had been spoken, and they could not but leave a certain uneasiness of feeling behind. Both must have felt, whatever we may have said, that there was something left unsatisfied, and a certain want of confidence remaining between us. And when, the following evening, which we were spending alone, and I was spelling out with a dictionary Von Ordnung's great work on military organisation, I noticed that Eva took out from the bookcase a volume of 'Russell's

Modern Europe,' which formed one of those included in the Miss Haringtons' neat selection of standard authors in brown-leather bindings, and sat down by the fire to read it. But in a few minutes the pretty little head was nodding, and I don't think that estimable work was ever put in requisition again.

It was not often, however, that we were alone when at home, and I am bound to mention that our first dinner-party went off very successfully, except that Eva was rather taken aback by Mrs. Scrap kissing her with effusion when she came into the drawing-room; also that Eva quite forgot to give the signal for rising from the dinner-table, so that the ladies sat on till past ten o'clock. But the most successful event in this way was the meeting of the Leatherby Philharmonic Society which was held at our house on Christmas eve under Mr. Fergusson's presidency, with a full orchestra of seventeen performers, which gave classical music of the highest character for three consecutive hours. Mrs. Herries was spending the Christmas week with us, and Herries himself was persuaded to join her, arriving late in the evening and staying over till the following Monday, when he departed considerably before daylight to catch the early train to town. Mr. Paterson came down too, accompanied by the young lady from the Royal Academy, who, poor girl,

having no particular home of her own, was very glad to pay us a lengthened visit, and quite electrified the good folks of Leatherby at the concert by her powerful voice. Almost equal to professional, observed Mr. St. Leger, who played a second violin in the orchestra at the Handel festivals, and was considered nearly as great an authority as Mr. Fergusson himself; as indeed it well might be. The supper which followed went off very well; and when I proposed the toast of 'Prosperity to the Leatherby Philharmonic Society,' and thanked the president and members on behalf of the rest of the company for the splendid musical treat they had afforded us, there was both excitement and emotion when Mr. Fergusson, in responding, feelingly reviewed their past history, how through evil report and good report, undismayed by difficulty and embarrassment, the Society had maintained its course, till, from the humble beginning many of those present could remember, it had attained to its present magnificent development. Emboldened by this social success, Eva proposed giving a ball, and this I think was the only thing needed to bring up our popularity to the highest pitch; but there was a sort of understanding with the Miss Haringtons that we should not disturb their comfortable if old-fashioned furniture, so we abstained from the temptation.

OLD MAIDS.

MARRIAGE is essentially a secular ordinance, the mode by which Providence has provided for the continuance of the world we live in, and as such its conduct and arrangement are left to the reason and conscience of mankind; revelation, after its first institution, only indirectly dictating on the questions of choice, duty, and obligation. The children of this world marry and are given in marriage. As social life refines itself, as men grow better, more religious, holier, this ordinance more fitly prefigures a divine mystery, but still men and women, however religious, are never more children for this world than in this question of marriage. The questions of social equality, fitness of fortune, convenience, and family ties, may be said to come first with every one connected with the contracting parties. The fact that they will spend their time in this world together is the actuating consideration. Even the excellent divine, Dr. Hammond, having turned his thoughts towards matrimony, and fixed in his own mind upon the lady, withheld his declaration upon hearing that a man of greater fortune and pretensions turned his thoughts the same way. And so, as his biographer tells us, he "deposited his conjugal intendments," and she lost a saintly husband. Moral and religious worth, however strongly insisted upon, cannot be entertained as valid reasons for union, until its worldly suitableness is satisfactorily proved. A man under the sway of religious motives, spiritual, a professor, one who preaches self-denial, and to all appearance practises it, does not hesitate to prefer for his daughter a man of good social standing, whom he hopes to be all right, of whom he knows no harm,

who passes creditably, to another of inferior social pretensions, however rooted in the matter, and indeed entirely working with him in the cause he and the world alike assume nearest his heart. It is so—everybody takes it as a matter of course, except perhaps the blighted pretender; and viewing marriage as the ordinance which keeps all the world in its place, we are far from saying that we wish it otherwise. We hardly see how it could be otherwise. It is essential to the happiness of married life that husband and wife should be pairs in social refinement and manners. Nor could we, however we held her soul's interests paramount, advise a woman to overlook marked points of underbreeding, on account of a lover's spiritual zeal and enlightenment. We should counsel her on the contrary, not to run the risk of finding herself repelled by habits in themselves harmless indeed, and detracting nothing from his eternal prospects, but which, as accompanying him through time, would induce all through her union with him a painful sense of incongruity. Nay, even if his alliance would simply involve her in a change of social intercourse, and fix her in a home where it would be for her happiness to forget the graces and polish of her former life, he must be a man of ten thousand to compensate her in the long-run for what she has lost by what he can give her. While we belong to this world, our happiness is not compatible with the loss of either our own respect or the estimation of others; and, in truth, no woman who has made what the world has a right to call a bad match, one which sinks her to a lower grade, or involves her in

what common opinion views as humiliations, can enjoy any serenity of happiness.

Women, as the conservators of order, are as a rule ready both to acknowledge and enforce this law, and to submit themselves to it. Their ambition having no other outlet, a marriage below their pretensions cuts at the very root of hope. But as marriage, as well as suitable marriage, is the opening to her ambition, not to speak of other considerations, this submission not seldom costs her dear. To be married is, with perhaps the majority of women, the entrance into life, the point they assume for carrying out their ideas and aims; and there are not a few women in most circles whose personal claims are not such as to promise them unlimited choice, and who know this so well, that on receiving an offer of marriage they recognise it as an occasion—an opportunity. If such a clear-sighted maiden refuses a pretender to her hand because he does not reach her social standard, she does so alive to the alternative of a future—a life which offers her few honours and small gratitude, in return for the sacrifice she makes to social obligations. For, after all, a man very much in earnest, and uttering flatteries new to unaccustomed ears, may naturally be rejected on the instant with an unforeseen tenderness, exciting a momentary question. We adopt the word sacrifice, for which some apology is due to any single lady who reads this paper, from De Quincey, who is eloquent on the nobility and virtues of the old maids (insulting name he calls it) of England, in whom he recognises the most highly cultivated women of his day—a patrician class of martyrs, so to say, to the cause of social order. It is apropos to their merit as letter-writers.

"Three out of four of the letters in the mail-bag will be written by that class of women who have the most leisure and the most interest in a correspondence by the post. That class who combine more intelligence, cultivation, and thoughtfulness than any other in Europe—the class of unmarried women above twenty-five—an increasing class; women, who from mere dignity of character, have renounced all prospects of conjugal and parental life, rather than descend into habits unsuitable to their birth. Women capable of such sacrifices, and marked by such strength of mind, may be expected to think with deep feeling, and to express themselves (unless where they have been too much blinded by bookish connections), with natural grace."

This testimony, highly characteristic of its author, and expressing truly one cause for the number of single women to be found in the educated classes, is opposed to the prevailing tone of modern literature. It is under rare and small encouragement from fiction and poetry that a woman wraps herself in the haughty severity of *noblesse oblige*. Among her friends and belongings, indeed, it is an acknowledged social duty; they expect it of her as a matter of course: if a woman can't advance her family or distinguish herself, she can at least spare them the annoyance of inferior connections. But the novelist laughs at her for her pains. The readers of Mr. Trollope's admirable novel, 'Dr. Thorne,' which, as far as it has any other design than to interest and amuse its readers, is an attack on the prevalent views on this question, will recall the really pathetic appeal of Miss Gresham of Greshambury to her cousin and counsellor, the Lady Amelia de Courcy, on occasion of her receiving an offer from a member of the firm Gumption, Gazebee, and Gazebee, who is, to be sure, an attorney, though he only does business with peers and commoners of the very

highest class. His "manners," she pleads, "are quite excellent," his respect unbounded.

"You may say, Amelia, that he is only an attorney, and I believe that he is an attorney; but I am sure you would have esteemed him had you heard the very delicate way in which he expressed his sentiments. . . . I would not certainly, under any circumstances, accept him without consulting you. If I really disliked him, of course there would be no doubt; but I can't say, dearest Amelia, that I do absolutely dislike him, and I really think we should make each other very happy, if the marriage were suitable as regarded both our positions. . . . I don't wish at all to speak of my own feelings," she repeats with touching iteration; "but if he were not an attorney, he is, I think, the sort of man I should like. He is very nice in every way, and if you were not told, I don't think you'd know he was an attorney; but, dear Amelia, I will be guided by you altogether."

And dear Amelia, who represents society, does guide her, and pronounces it Miss Gresham's fate to be a victim. She is very sorry to grieve her cousin, but declares it better she should bear the grief of overcoming a temporary fancy than take a step "which some of your friends would certainly regard as disgraceful." "It is not permitted to us, my dear Augusta," she adds, "to think of ourselves in such matters. As you truly say, if we were to act in that way what would the world come to?" &c. &c. "It is natural," she admits, "for girls to wish to marry: those who are weak take the first that comes; those who have more judgment make a selection; but the strongest-minded are, perhaps, those who are able to forego themselves and their fancies, and to refrain from any alliance that does not tend to high principles." The hapless Augusta remains one of these strong-minded foregoers, and

four years after Lady Amelia marries Gazebee herself—this comic sequel, of course, a warning to high-born ladies not to put their destiny in such material matters out of their own keeping. And yet, when all things are said, it would not have been a suitable match, as society is constituted,—and the treacherous Lady Augusta spoke some truths; so long, that is, as there is such a thing as acknowledged rank; and all rank is a thing of degrees. But not only does our author, in the van of liberal opinion, and with whom the prejudices and social tyrannies of the aristocracy are a favourite theme, thus strike at the root of old prescription; that great innovator the pen is equally active in female hands;—partly in tender pity to the suffering caused by it to gentle natures, and, more recently, in a deliberate rebellion against the sex's conservatism and submission to antiquated laws of caste, Mrs. Gaskell, scarcely to be called an innovator,—in no sense didactic, like her gifted successors,—covers these scruples of caste with a tender ridicule in her incomparable Cranford papers, where all the ladies are so poor, so genteel, so conscious of pretensions ignored by the world; where they all congratulate themselves on their freedom from masculine society, "a man is so in the way in a house;" where Miss Matty is condemned to everlasting spinsterhood by her inexorable sister, who could not submit to the degradation of a brother-in-law who called himself yeoman, and did not allow himself to be addressed as esquire; and where—though this is not strictly to our point—the widow of rank and small means, Lady Glenmire, convulses the whole society by engaging herself to Mr. Hoggins, the country apothecary, who talked loud, wore creaking top-boots, and whom the ladies of Cranford had reason to

believe supped on bread, cheese, and beer every night. As we read we confess to some share of the popular sense of propriety outraged; it is unfair to have a title and not to recognise its restrictive obligations. However, the unprecedented step meets with the chronicler's tacit approval. Why should not a pair of mature age please themselves? seems to be the line of argument. Everything can be proved in fiction, and we admit it one of the missions of imagination to accustom society to the idea of social changes; but experience has still its strong counter-case. "What I especially dislike in Kingsley's 'Yeast,'" says Miss Mitford, "is his making both his humble-born heroes fall in love with young ladies. To be sure he does not actually make them marry, but he shows that *he* (the author) has no objection. Now it has happened to me to see the final issue of two or three of these disproportioned marriages, and I have always found they result in great unhappiness to the inferior—that is, the promoted party." And this is the common observation; therefore we do not give up our respect for those martyrs to station who keep themselves single for an idea. In fact, without these vestals, society would go down. But it is not among them that the highest type of old maid is to be found.

Nor is one of Nature's born old maids deserving of this pre-eminence. There are women with whom marriage forms no part of their plan of life. Nature has provided them with a temperament fitted for independence, and benignantly denied them attractions which might have interfered with their vocation. It is said of such women that they ought to be caught young to make tractable wives; but such women fulfil their purpose best single, and

in that state only give rise to no regrets of misfit. Take, for example, Miss Priscilla in 'Silas Marner,' that picture of burly cheerfulness undisturbed by fine perceptions. She herself, the gentlemen of her acquaintance, and the reader who recognises the truth of the portrait, must all be of one mind as to her fitness for the calling she chose for herself, and for no other. Witness her satisfaction, not assumed, in her own plainness, and her heedless comprehension of the Miss Gunns in her profession of that satisfaction. "I am ugly—there's no denying that: I feature my father's family; but, law! I don't mind; do you?" Witness her native antagonism to the opposite sex: "I've no opinion o' the men, Miss Gunn. I don't know what *you* have. And as for fretting and stewing about what they'll think of you from morning till night, it's a folly no woman need be guilty of if she's got a good father and a good home. As I say, Mr. Have-your-own-way is the best husband, and the only one I'd ever promise to obey." And, again, her arrogating celibacy to herself as a birthright and vocation, reproaching her pretty sister for sitting on an addled egg (an unpromising choice) for ever: "One old maid's enough out o' two sisters; and I shall do credit to a single life, for God Almighty meant me for it."

The highest type of old maid has made no sacrifice, nor is she in any sense a victim, for marriage as a state is not necessary to her idea of happiness; but she has none of that antagonism towards half the human race which Miss Priscilla makes her boast; nor is she one who has set herself against marriage, or whom no man has ever wished to marry. She is the woman who has never met with her ideal, and who has never been cunningly persuaded to accept anything short of it.

Every woman with any romance or magnanimity has, so far as she contemplates marriage for herself merely in the abstract, an ideal, or some vague assemblage of high qualities which stands for such. She can only suppose herself voluntarily linking her fate with another, if that other is a man exceptionally good or noble, or at least distinguished among his fellows. At all events he must be something quite above the common run of men about her. The typical old maid has had this ideal, and been faithful to it: it may be for want of adequate temptation to inconstancy. Some women—the charming woman, for example—have not been allowed to keep their ideal. They have lost sight of it in finding themselves the ideal of some one else. Our typical vestal has never been a charming woman, though she may have many excellent gifts and graces. Women are so made, happily for men, that gratitude, pity, the exquisite pleasure of pleasing, the sweet surprise of finding themselves necessary to another's happiness (or being flattered into the notion), altogether obscure and confuse the judgment; they either forget their ideal altogether, or think they have found it in the very commonplace mortal who is their choice. But to some women this does not happen. The natural instinct to please is not strong in them. They only care to please where their taste and judgment approve, and their manner is cold or indifferent in general society. There is a French proverb, compounded of resignation and worldly policy, which represents the submission and destiny of the attractive woman: *Quand on n'a pas ce qu'on aime, il faut aimer ce qu'on a*. It is not that the other is deliberately unattractive, but she recognises no necessity. She does not want to please out of her pale of sympathies; and the alterna-

tive has no terrors for her. In fact she has foreseen that a single life is her probable destiny. It is not at all necessary that this unattractiveness should have to do with a conscious want of beauty. A beautiful woman, as far as colour and outline constitute beauty,—but failing in bewitching qualities,—may repel admiration by indifference, and live to glorify the sisterhood to which her manner devotes her; but it is the woman of commonplace exterior and sensitive mind that is most commonly left alone with her ideal. We believe that almost any woman who is not what is called “particular,” may marry if she chooses—that is, if she does not speculate upon herself, or share the world's unfavourable view of her personal pretensions. Again, persons of simple character, who don't think much about themselves, but enter cheerfully into the scene around them, pleased, amused, contented, have an unconscious attractiveness quite independent of laws of beauty. But our typical old maid is not intellectually simple, but complex, however morally she is above worldly schemes for her own settlement in life. The present, except under circumstances of rare occurrence, does not engross her or absorb her interest. She has a mind looking before, after, and about her—unless, indeed, she has benevolent plans of usefulness, which concentrate her attention on some object;—a posture of mind and body, we should say, which further removes woman from her bewitching attitude than any other. Whatever her interests and occupations, her own life, and what she is to make of it, is a present question with her. She does not wait for marriage to solve it; she feels it in her own hands. She has never met her ideal, or, if she has seen what might have been such, she has recognised an impossibility—consti-

tuted as she is—which must keep her apart from it. In good time she makes her destiny her choice. She will indeed be nobody's idol. Nobody will love her best. No one will find out graces hid from the common gaze, but which she does not therefore believe non-existent. She will occupy no such place in society as under favouring circumstances she believes she could fill. She will preside over no home, constitute no family centre and guide; she will miss what some, perhaps most women, consider the prizes of life, as well as its work and *raison d'être*. But for all these prosperities she finds in her own case equivalents. She knows—her observation tells her—that the drawbacks to them which other women are blind to, put up with, cheerfully ignore, ride over by a strong will, or by acts she cannot approve, would go far to neutralise them in her case. She perceives, in fact, that these things are not for her. One prosperous, comfortable, and blooming friend, for example, has a husband whose faults and disagreeable qualities would keep her ashamed and miserable. Another lives in ease and wealth, but has no control over the wealth she lives in—has to ask her husband if she wants five pounds for her own purposes, with a chance of being questioned or even refused. Another, a doting mother, has children whose weak health or unpromising tempers would hold her in gnawing anxiety. Another's time is taken up by pleasures, or cares, or business, which would all be to her an intolerable bondage. The reality of marriage to such a one *who* has kept to her ideal of perfect union, grand cares, noble pleasures, and elevated usefulness, presents often a sordid, carking, worrying, threatening aspect. If she had been in the thick of the conflict it would have been otherwise. She

would have stood by her order, and habit and duty would have brought their own reward. Nobody would blot out, if they could, the bitter experiences of the deeper affections and emotions, or exchange their poignant joys and sorrows for an even serenity: and these superior pleasures and cares she takes on faith; but still the uncongenialities with her own temperament are most keenly perceived, and naturally this is a growing sentiment. Use makes everything but pain pleasant, and liberty once enjoyed by a temperate and vigorous mind becomes of all good gifts the one most essential to happiness. No wise woman who has for any length of time had the command of her own time and freedom to exercise her own will, and has found her happiness in independence, will give her time and freedom into another's keeping—assuming, of course, that she has means, however moderate, to maintain her in the same way of life. It would not be good for all women—perhaps for most women—to have this undisputed disposal of themselves; but the woman who has shown herself equal to the charge of herself is the woman to do credit to the single state. And in women who settle themselves in all the eligibilities of this condition without dreaming of change, and who are adapted to it by fair health of mind and body, is observable a lasting youthfulness of mind and spirits. Spirits will be but fitful, and liveliness will be forced, so long as women are painfully alive to the passage of Time—as of a power cheating them of their legitimate expectations. People are at the very antipodes of their object who are *anxious* to seem young. The world necessarily judges of age by the register, and a sensible woman, however young she feels, will regulate her conduct towards others by that record. But not the less is

she conscious of a spring of youth in herself, an elasticity of spirit, an unforced cheerfulness, not to be discerned in her married compeers. Mothers, wives, widows arrived at mature middle life are cheerful, but it is not the same cheerfulness; there is a memory of tears in it in tender natures, or a resolute forgetting of worries and cares lurking just round the corner, in spirits of a bolder, stronger fibre. The spinster feels young among them who is separated from her former self by none—by fewer, at least—of the harsh breaks and dislocations which make people feel old. She carries her former self along with her, and can recall no point where the girl ended in the matron. The young find out this unconsciously; and the old maid who has not had the romance knocked out of her by the sad slaveries of life, may be observed to be the confidante, referee, adviser, of all the nice girls of her circle. We speak, of course, comparatively. Trial comes to all. But marriage and its consequences give it the keenest edge and most deep and lasting impression. The exterior will always adapt itself to the character and circumstances of the mind that inhabits it; and the old maid, however judicious her taste, will carry about an atmosphere, as it were, of her calling, a virginal overtrimness perhaps, a cheerful, paler colouring than as matron she would have assumed. Something in her face will express the fact that she has no master but her own will, or that she is unsupported by a background of prestige, or that she has unchecked particularities; some not to be defined hint of the "old maidish" may be there; but through it all the countenance of this higher type will have a certain youth about it not due to the fewness of its years. Nothing makes people look older

than long subjugation to a selfish, unsympathising, or what goes by the name of a steady will—a will that checks the play of fancy. A woman may be devoted to her husband; but if she is always planning how to compass her ends, and running her head against the rock of his inflexibility, her face will show traces of the conflict; while the spinster of her own standing holds crow's-feet and wrinkles still in abeyance from the complacency resultant on mere liberty of action: not but that she has a heart as open to the troubles of others as the matron, and perhaps a wider and more active sympathy; but it must be admitted that sympathy in other's trials, however deep and long sustained, does not inflict on the countenance the permanent lines that the like cares do in our own case.

No circle, we believe, is without some old maid within its observation who will bear out this portrait, however far it is removed from the popular, even indulgent view, of the class which prevails among us. As opposed to the French notion of the *vieille fille* who is found impersonated in Balzac's 'Cousine Bette,' our literature patronises the old maid, as a useful creature—not necessarily at all venomous—conveniently without anything to do on her own account, no occupation that may not at once be laid aside at the summons of relations or neighbours whom custom encourages to send for when they want her, and forget her all the rest of the year; as one of a class whom nature intends for lieutenants, placed by the fact of their leisure in a position to render temporary service on occasions when their help is required, and then to retreat into insignificance till the next opportunity. The vigorous mind, content with its place in the

world, strikes root where it is placed, and is not shifted without effort and sacrifice; and our typical old maid, having never passed her days in waiting for what may turn up, but from a girl applied herself to the work that presented itself to her hands, can never be caught in the absolutely disengaged state—like a leech in a bottle—which constitutes an essential condition of the old maid's usefulness in the world's eye.

Strength and early independence of mind are, however, rare characteristics, and, wanting them, the popular ideal presents the old maid in as important a position as she can hold. For, truth to say, some single women fit their narrow sphere for the opposite reason that they are never useful. Though they have excellent abstract qualities, it seems an accident of their organisation that they never answer to any current, existing demand. Nobody, whether man or woman, has ever found them the very thing they want. However great the emergency, it never calls them out. Through no distinct selfishness or awkwardness they miss the gifts of helpfulness and resource, and are content to be shelved among things out of use. In fact, it is part of their incapacity that they never recognise an opening or a call, and can see the busiest at their wits' end without any personal application. Sometimes in a family of sisters the one old maid will be of this type, the last to be called to mind in cases of sickness and difficulty, and yet for no very obvious reason.

Of course, in talking of old maids, we do not include women of large fortune, who may be anything they please. No woman with a few thousands a-year will have to complain of want of opportunities of changing her condition, want of

position, or want of respect; nor will she be the first to occur to the distracted mother's mind whose dozen children are taken with the measles at once as the person to come and help in the nursing, and sit up with baby. People with money are always supposed to have something to do. Importance implies a certain sort of occupation. But strength is relative. No woman without a certain independence and force of character is fit to be an old maid. There are feeble women who might make passable wives, but who make deplorable old maids: they are wretched single, and impart some of their wretchedness to all who have to do with them: they trail for want of a prop, and lie huddled like some unlucky creeper, an unshapely heap, for want of the vigorous stem that should hold it up. Such women cannot believe they are not to be married some day. Somebody to love, to be afraid of, to look up to, to swear by, some duties imposed by necessity, do strike the observer as such a necessity for their wellbeing or even creditable existence, that the life-long attitude of expectation, however hopeless, is almost justified. Women of this character have probably had many fair opportunities of settling in life,—feebleness in girlhood not seldom takes an attractive form,—but perhaps no one to compel them to a decision; and there is wanting to this temperament the powers of falling genuinely in love, as well as of coming to a fixed resolve. Life is all expectation with the feeble woman; she recoils from a final step, and would as likely as not still slip out of an engagement which she had stimulated all her small despairing energies to bring to a point. The beauty who, in vulgar phrase, has overstood her market, does not make an amiable old maid.

She feels her life has been a mistake, and is soured accordingly. There is something in the possession and consciousness of beauty which interferes with the frank bestowal of the affections. The woman who is made to understand by all the world that she is handsome, acquires a notion of duty to her claims which supersedes and puts the appeals of the heart out of countenance. She is afraid of wasting her advantages, and asks herself at critical moments, Can I do better? For a brief year or two all the world lies within the grasp of her elated fancy. When the niece in the play asks her aunt why she never married, the answer is, "My dear, I was very cruel thirty years ago, and nobody asked me since." Such reverses sharpen alike features and temper. The ladies haunted by these regrets are a bugbear to their kindred; even their kindnesses have a sting in them: there is something irritating to them in other people's success and happiness; the trials of married life would have left them more amiable.

On the other hand, there are many women clearly unfitted for married life by certain not necessarily serious disqualifications. Eccentricity is one of these. Eccentricity is not a concealable quality. It must show itself and be conspicuous, and had best indulge itself without implicating others in its manifestations. An eccentric old maid may well have friends who value her, and put up with her singularities, or, more than put up with them, find amusement in them, and a certain freshness. It is her way; it supplies good stories behind her back. The house may be ordered by her own whim rather than by custom. Her dress may be queer, her voice loud, her language marked by anomalies, her contempt of convention may be carried to an extreme,

her likes and dislikes may be unaccountable under ordinary principles, and vehemently maintained. She may have her fits of silence, of exaltation, or excitement,—in fact, any startling divergence from received usage,—and yet not sin against any law but usage, and make a very happy and creditable old maid. But the husband of an eccentric woman must suffer and lose in social estimation: the oddities which amuse the world crush or exasperate his spirit. A woman who will say whatever comes into her head, and singles out her husband before a large company as witness or subject of her remarks, reduces him to a most unenviable position. His only resource is silence and insignificance, to look as small as he feels, and shrink into the background, and wonder in his heart why by a voluntary act he ever exposed himself to such miseries. Nor does even silence—a reserved eccentricity—make the subject of it more desirable as a wife. It is as strong an outrage against custom to invite friends and then forget them, or deliberately to absent herself, as to startle them by singular opinions, strange arrangements, or absurd costume. The woman who does not mean to conform to the rules of society should keep single. The woman who calls herself *odd*, as though to be odd and original were the same thing, should hold by her self-estimate and keep odd in every sense.

As a rule, we believe that women who give themselves up to literature are happiest single, especially if their turn is authorship. We believe there are so many distinguished examples opposed to our view that we express ourselves with diffidence. But on the rule that no writing is worth much that does not occupy the freshest hours,

and embody the freshest thoughts of the writer, it follows by a sort of necessity that husband, children, household, must be either rivals of the inventive faculty, or sufferers by it. We doubt, also, how far a mind mainly occupied either by its own powers of invention or some absorbing subject or pursuit can stand in woman's social position as converser, can adapt itself as readily, take up another's tone, turn itself to common interests as keenly. Duty will make a woman attend to all the concerns that depend upon her, but not lovingly. She misses the pride and satisfaction of success in a conjugal sphere. Her household is hard work—an interruption, and she is conscious of not succeeding as well or as gracefully as another who finds it her vocation, and recognises in it the business of her life. However, we are treading on a battlefield of conflicting opinions, from which we would keep clear.

It has been one of the achievements of spinsterhood to advance the cause of education, to make women as a body less ignorant, to infuse into them at least some smattering of intellectual accomplishment; and this was done under an amount of discouragement which constitutes the blue-stocking a true if somewhat obtrusive martyr to the cause of mind. Men of all time have received woman's first efforts to learn with ridicule at the best, often with censure, for presumption in stepping out of her sphere. Wits, satirists, and moralists have agreed in snubbing her struggles to read and to know something of the studies and the questions which interest men. It has needed a strong heart and some obstinacy of resolution to stand against the current of social opinion. What wonder that some awkwardness of

self-assertion should disfigure the creditable industry of application, the real love of knowledge, which could pursue it under the joint opposition of all men and the great body of women? There is no doubt that the sex have been gainers; but the shifts and necessities of the conflict reduced their champions to some modes of strengthening their position which had their disadvantages. What could would-be learned women do under the circumstances but form themselves into coteries?—and the strength of a coterie consists in extolling its members up to the skies, and seeing nothing beyond itself. There certainly were women in the blue-stocking days who talked oracularly, and believed they pretty well knew all that was worth knowing in the line they devoted themselves to. We do not know any fairer portrait of this character than we find in the following letter of Charles Lamb to Coleridge. His Miss B—— is a typical blue-stocking, and, as such, best single. In spite of her pragmatism, her narrow positiveness, her self-display, her deadness to the genius she was snubbing, we recognise a very respectable old maid, with resources which would not forsake her through life; but we would not be the husband of so much learning, to be edified day by day with third-rate literature, and cut-and-dried criticisms and opinions. We make no apology for the length of so pleasant an example of his characteristic manner:—

"I came home t'other day from business, hungry as a hunter, to dinner, with nothing, I am sure, *of the author but hunger* about me, and whom found I closeted with Mary but a friend of this Miss W——, one Miss B—— or B——y; I don't know how she spells her name. I just came in time enough, I believe, luckily to prevent them from exchanging vows of eternal friendship.

It seems she is one of your authoresses that you first foster and then upbraid us with—but I forgive you. Well go she would not, nor step a step over our threshold till we had promised to come and drink tea with her next night. I had not seen her before, and could not tell who it was that was so familiar. We went, however, not to be impolite. Her lodgings are up two pair of stairs in — Street. Tea, coffee, and macaroons—a kind of cake I much love. We sat down. Presently Miss B— broke the silence by declaring herself quite of a different opinion from Disraeli, who supposes the differences of human intellect to be the mere effect of organisation. She begged to hear my opinion. I attempted to carry it off by a pun upon organ, but that went off very flat. She immediately conceived a very low opinion of my metaphysics; and turning round to Mary, put some questions to her in French, possibly having heard that neither Mary nor I understood French. The explanation that took place occasioned some embarrassment and much wondering. She then fell into an insulting conversation about the comparative genius and merits of all modern languages, and concluded with asserting that the Saxon was esteemed the purest dialect in Germany. From thence she passed into the subject of poetry, where I, who had hitherto sat mute and a hearer only, humbly hoped I might put in a word to some advantage, seeing that it was my own trade in a manner. But I was stopped by a round assertion that no good poetry had appeared since Dr. Johnson's time. It seems the Doctor has suppressed many hopeful geniuses that way by the severity of his critical strictures in his *Lives of the Poets*. I here ventured to question the fact, and was beginning to appeal to *names*, but I was assured that 'it was certainly the case.' Then we discussed Miss More's book on education, which I had never read. It seems Dr. Gregory, another of Miss B—'s friends, had found fault with one of Miss More's metaphors. Miss More had been at some pains to vindicate herself—in the opinion of Miss B—, not without success. It seems the doctor is invariably against the use of broken or mixed metaphor, which he reprobates against the authority of Shakspeare

himself. We next discussed the question whether Pope was a poet. I find Dr. Gregory is of opinion he was not, though Miss Seward does not at all concur with him on this. We then sat upon the comparative merits of the ten translations of 'Pizarro,' and Miss B— advised Mary to take two of them home; she thought it might afford her some pleasure to compare them *verbatim*, which we declined. It being now nine o'clock, wine and macaroons were again served round, and we parted with a promise to go again next week, and meet the Miss Porters, who, it seems, have heard much of Mr. Coleridge, and wish to meet us because we are *his* friends. I have been preparing for the occasion. I crowd cotton into my ears. I read all the reviews and magazines of the past month, against the dreaded meeting, and I hope by these means to cut a tolerable second-rate figure."

There are many old maids who might have made excellent wives, who yet find their best place in single life as social links and enliveners of monotonous circles. These are the women of many friends, who have that power of self-adaptation that they never lose their fitness for change of scene and habits, and can grow old in visits, welcome wherever they go. Some conditions are, in a degree, necessary to this existence; tolerable health and activity, freedom from oddities of person or manner, quiet, unobtrusive cheerfulness, and few scruples. Tact, of course, is essential, and facility of falling into new ways, and into everybody's tastes and amusements. The visitor must be a good narrative-talker, not given to much speculation on motives, which makes people formidable; but, far above all, she must be a good sympathetic listener, taking in the thread of interests she finds up the ascendant, and judicious in comment and suggestion. In addition to all this it is well for her,

to have taste in dress for the benefit of others, and to dress well herself for her own self-respect, and to be so far independent in her own circumstances, that she need never accept an invitation because it is convenient to do so, or give her entertainer the notion he is conferring a pecuniary favour.

There are persons in the position of old maids who ought not fairly to be classed among them—where for instance, there has been an engagement of sufficient standing to test the reality and constancy of affection, and that surrender of will and independence into another's keeping, which constitutes the sentiment of marriage. Nor does the woman who remains single for the sake of father or brother, who shares his interests and his confidences, come quite under the category. Her intellectual relations with man are rather after the conjugal type; she escapes many of the bitternesses of woman left to herself, and, on the other hand, she is less mistress of herself.

The unamiable old maid is too stock a character in satire and fiction to need analysis here. We doubt much whether a spiteful old maid is not best as she is. Spitefulness, as a quality, is not engendered by celibacy; it belongs to the character, and is to be found quite as venomous in married life, where perhaps it does more mischief. An ill-natured mother perpetuates herself in narrow, illiberal, gossiping children. Not, of course, that the unrestrained talk that idle women sometimes allow themselves—the brooding over the doings of friends, relations, and neighbours—does not often issue in unfair judgments and worse things, but it does equally so with men. False rumours and scandalous reports, the devising evil and the pleasure in listening to it, the whole brood of malignancy,

own no sex. It is the lesser power in women to find issue for their execrations, constituting them objects of contempt, which has fastened the epithet spiteful on the spinster. What, perhaps, the single life is often answerable for, is the chatter in which some women pass their lives. We suppose that nothing can equal the dilution to which human converse may be reduced, by two women spending their lives together with nothing to do. The flux of words, the repetitions, the perpetual harpings on worn-out topics, set off by a forced cheerfulness, which keeps up the flow, as it were, to prove to themselves and outsiders that they are content with their condition, finds no parallel elsewhere. Mothers and wives can't help having some business to be attended to. Single women often have no obvious duties that the world can lay its finger upon. They can only talk.

There have been a great many speculations on the number, large and increasing, of the class which has been our topic. We have no doubt that growing refinement is one great cause of this increase. In the working classes, where congeniality of tastes is little thought of, an old maid is a rarity, though the proportions of the sexes must be the same. Marriage even among the less fastidious of a higher class, cannot now be owned the one object of life, as it was understood to be on all hands a hundred and fifty years ago. Could an author of Addison's standard of delicacy report an offer of marriage in this day as he does with such hearty approval, where the young gentleman, after paying his court to the haughty beauty, and getting only severe looks and distant civilities for his pains, turns to her plain sister Daphne, and with the preliminary that he has something

to say to her that he hopes she would be pleased with, begins, "Faith, Daphne, I'm in love with thee, and despise thy sister immensely!" Daphne laughs, but snaps at the proposal, while the father congratulates himself on the turn of affairs, having now no care but for his beauty, which he thought he could carry to market at his leisure. "I do not know anything," the author good-naturedly adds, "that has pleased me so much a great while as this conquest of my friend Daphne's." In the fragment of a story—"The Watsons"—lately published in 'The Life of Jane Austen,' is a conversation on this subject between two sisters, which indicates the advance of feeling, the awakening to a higher sense of the relation of marriage which intellectual pursuits were bringing about in Miss Austen's own day. We see this growing nicety at once through the authoress and her characters. The passage altogether is as true to nature as happily expressed, as distinctively marked by her peculiar vein as anything she committed to publicity; but something in it shocked her sense of dignity or refinement. She would not let a woman she cared for commit herself to the sentiment expressed. It was true to life, but she did not care to betray it. It is where the elder sister, who personates the lower view of marriage, remarks upon the younger girl's refinement as an unfamiliar quality acquired away from her natural home—as a romantic sentiment sure to militate against the solid practical happiness of life. Elizabeth, the elder, had been confiding to Emma, the younger, the disappointment of her life. A certain Tom Purvis had at one time paid her great attention, till the arts of a second sister, Penelope, had driven him from her—arts futile as regards the treacherous sister, but

successful in mischief. Emma warmly sympathises, and suggests some benevolent interpretations of the unknown Penelope's conduct.

"You do not know Penelope. There is nothing she would not do to get married. She would as good as tell you so herself. Do not trust her with any secrets of your own; take warning by me, do not trust her: she has her good qualities, but she has no faith, no honour, no scruples, if she can promote her own advantage. I wish with all my heart she was well married. I declare I had rather have her well married than myself!"

"Than yourself! yes, I can suppose so. A heart wounded like yours can have little inclination for matrimony!"

"Not much indeed—but you know we must marry."

"I could do very well single for my own part."

"A little company and a pleasant ball now and then, would be enough for me, if one could be young for ever; but my father cannot provide for us, and it is very bad to grow old and be poor and laughed at. I have lost Purvis, it is true; but very few people marry their first loves. I should not refuse a man because he was not Purvis. Not that I can ever quite forgive Penelope."

"Emma shook her head in acquiescence."

Penelope, Elizabeth goes on to tell her, has her troubles too. She is supposed to be trying to make a match at Chichester, with a rich old Dr. Harding, but she keeps her own counsel, saying, truly enough, "Too many cooks spoil the broth."

"I am sorry for her anxieties," said Emma, "but I do not like her plan or her opinions. I shall be afraid of her. She must have too masculine and bold a temper. To be so bent on marriage, to pursue a man merely for the sake of situation, is a sort of thing that shocks me; I cannot understand it. Poverty is a great evil; but to a woman of education and feeling it ought not, it cannot be the greatest. I would rather be a teacher in a school (and I can think

of nothing worse) than marry a man I did not like.'

"I would rather do anything than be a teacher at a school," said her sister. 'I have been at school, Emma, and know what a life they lead. You never have. I should not like marrying a disagreeable man any more than yourself; but I do not think there are many very disagreeable men; I think I could like any good-humoured man with a comfortable income. I suppose my aunt brought you up to be rather refined.'

"Indeed I do not know. My conduct must tell you how I have been brought up. I am no judge of it myself. I cannot compare my aunt's method with any other person's, because I know no other.'

"But I can see in a great many things that you are very refined; I have observed it ever since you came home; and I am afraid it will not be for your happiness. Penelope will laugh at you very much.'

This is what education and a more refined public opinion have done for women: they have enlarged their perception of disagreeable men, and taught them to prefer their own company to the society of the vulgar, ill-tempered, or illiterate. They do not lay themselves out to please such men as indeed the Penelopes shown up by the fragment will always do, but not such women as the Elizabeth who utters these sentiments. It is clearly less intolerable to woman to be an old maid than it has been; the single life for her has never had such a "good time" as now; and as this fact becomes patent, certain prevalent characteristics open to unfavourable criticism may become modified, softened, or even disappear altogether. The time may even come when you will not detect an old maid with her gloves on, but the era is probably far distant. It cannot be denied that marriage so far is a finer school for manner than celibacy. No manner can be *excellent* that is not self-pos-

sessed; but self-possession needs in ordinary intercourse, for its perfect expression, the double consciousness of self-respect and an acknowledged position. Manner is a complex product. As old Massey says, there are two sorts of opinion—the opinion a man has of himself, and the opinion the world has of him. The wife is at one with the world; she feels herself a citizeness, a transmitter of its traditions. The old maid knows herself in the world's eye a cipher—her self-possession wants the world's backing. In some it degenerates into self-assertion, and in many it fails altogether. The married woman can take herself for granted. Society interferes with this ease of assurance in the single woman; hence the liveliness, the allusions, the consciousness of some manners, or, in fear of these errors, the self-restraint, the stiffness, the conventional rigidity. A good manner perfects itself towards early middle life. It takes its highest polish where the woman has a fixed present and future—she has "settled," in homely phrase. But whatever a woman's own state of feeling, no woman has settled in the world's eye until she has married, or is past speculating upon, and her ways are moulded by habit into the form they must keep to the end.

Marriage may be regarded in two aspects,—as gaining a congenial companion for life, or offering a basis of operations. Holding the one view, a woman is much more likely to end her life single than in the other. There is much to be said for both views. The woman who feels powers and impulses in herself that a single life would allow no field for, does not deserve our censure for accepting what she holds to be a call towards the duties to which she feels herself born, though she has to arrive at them through a medi-

um accepted as such, rather than as offered as a perfect marriage of two minds. A woman may accept a worthy man for a husband though she is not in love with him. The Bible nowhere bids her look about, or even wait, for the best man. It asserts principles, and leaves them to operate; but it regards marriage under what we will call the sensible view—that which consolidates states and families. Sentiment is left to evolve itself gradually as man advances in refinement. Of these two classes of women, the one that marries respectably is called by the consent of mankind *fortunate*; the one that misses her ideal, or from any cause remains unchosen, is assumed “the less fortunate of her sex.” Nor is the epithet misapplied, as certainly she is endowed with fewer of the gifts of fortune than her wedded sister. But this difference is one apt very sensibly to diminish with years. Whatever the advantages of the bride, the balance of the account may very likely be on the other side at fifty or three score. Many an old maid blesses her lot as she compares it with that of her mar-

ried compeers, and sees what the gay husbands of their youth have turned into under the attrition of years—sees them in all the helplessness, peevishness, and exacting discontent of unwelcome, unlovely old age. She speculates perhaps on the short-lived nature of attraction. Two young people meet, bright, youthful, debonair; a sense of fitness strikes not head but fancy. If they are thrown much together, the fancy matures into a liking from mere proximity; and so these people, with little really in common, have come to pass their lives together, and are now wearing them out in contact rather than agreement. She recalls, perhaps, similar encounters in her youth to which circumstance and occasion did not lend their aid. Chance brings before her some transient fancy of her girlhood, and she shudders to think what might have been! Compensation, that great harmoniser of lots, and rectifier of fortune’s caprices, has no wider field, no greater triumphs, than in equalising the amount of happiness in the two states of life we have been discussing.

A PRECARIOUS EXISTENCE.

THAT the Ministry should be able to keep their battered craft afloat at all, after so many disasters, is proof that the political situation is exceptional. Government is not certain of support on any question whatever. It does not know how to gauge the disposition of its nominal supporters, and often finds itself suddenly and unexpectedly deserted. The progress of business has been lamentably slow. And yet the helpless rulers are able to retain office, presenting a problem not to be solved in very few words. They, of course, will keep their places as long as they can, unabashed by the mistrust with which they are regarded; and the explanation of their continuance must be looked for in the dispositions of others. The Opposition, as is well known, is not eager for office, does not press the Ministry, and leaves to it the task of destroying itself, which, considering the strength with which it was weighted when it came into office, it can hardly do much faster than it is doing. But the manner in which the Liberal party manifests its dissatisfaction with the Government by sudden outbreaks of rebellion, but without a steady endeavour to subvert it, is the peculiar feature of the case. There is no open marshalling of a Liberal force against it; but somehow majorities are given to the Opposition fitfully, the Government being ostentatiously supported in the intervals between them. To explain this it is necessary to look not only at the mistakes and wilfulness which have rendered some of the defeats inevitable, but also at the way in which systems of general spoliation and disturbance cannot fail to operate. It is, we fear,

but too much the custom of human nature to find something in the condition of others which may be thought too easy, or too profitable, or too honourable for them. It seems entirely reasonable that our neighbour should be a little circumscribed in his gains, his enjoyments, or the advantages of his position. It will do him good, poor man, to take him down a little; and if this can be done under shelter of the law, every one must see how just and proper it is to do it. So, when we hear that the spoiler-general is taking account of our neighbour's emoluments, habits, &c., we recognise a course which we had long foreseen to be inevitable. Neither are we much startled when we hear that another neighbour, and another, and another, is to be weighed and pinched to see how fat he is; they really could not expect that things could go on much longer as they had been going for some time past, and the spoiler-general would have been greatly to blame if he had shut his eyes to what had been apparent to us, alas! only too long. One fine day, however, we hear that we ourselves are to be put into the scale, and of course our first inclination is to laugh at a thing so absurd. Everybody knows how overworked and underpaid we are, under what disabilities we labour, and, in short, not to mince matters, everybody agrees that our deserts entitle us to very much more than we receive. The spoiler-general—pshaw! stuff!! Besides, haven't we always given him our hearty and powerful support when he was down upon our neighbours, and so established an irresistible claim upon his forbearance?—pshaw! stuff!! we say again. But once more we hear that we are

to be weighed; and again we hear it, and again. What can make people say so? There *cannot* be the least truth in it. There is, though, for we get a mysterious hint from the spoiler-general himself. Why, what can it mean? The man must be stark mad! We took him for a sensible, discriminating fellow, and a man with some sense of gratitude, but this—well it is high time for people to look about them. We seek out our *quondam* friend the spoiler-general, remonstrate with, upbraid, revile him; and we are answered with many words of doubtful import, one signification of which seems to be that some good-natured neighbour has been absurdly showing us to him in much the same light in which we (and with justice) had been accustomed to show him our neighbours. We blow off much steam in exclamations, threats, and citations of heaven and earth to witness the wickedness that is contemplated; but nevertheless the injury begins to take shape, and it is simply astonishing and maddening to observe how quietly people allow this foul robbery to go on. We get no relief from our fears as time rolls along; and, by-and-by, we find ourselves uttering exactly the same complaints, using the same words in fact which, with so much impatience, we had heard our neighbours use a hundred times. Notwithstanding the immense dissimilarity between their cases and ours, we find that we have all got somehow into the same boat, as they say; and, however we may differ as to the merits of the respective cases, we all join in condemning the spoiler-general. It is soon evident that the despoiled and threatened may be able to help each other if they make common cause; and indeed that seems to be about the only course open, so there is no choice but a compact. We, on our part, must be

content to forego our just and equitable strictures on our neighbour's condition, and to let him (much as we disapprove such a course) enjoy his goods in peace; while he, on his part, withdraws his nefarious designs and imputations from us. We begin to warm to one another, and to rake up old exploded fancies about "live and let live," and "do to others as you would have them do to you"—childish resources, no doubt, but a man *does* get soft when people are so unreasonably harsh with him! Well, never mind that: perhaps there are now enough of us to make the spoiler-general feel our power; if so, there is the delicious prospect of revenge. We will turn upon him, denounce him; but soft—our professions of faith in him, and allegiance to him, there's the rub. We have all been so loud and demonstrative in praising and supporting him that we may damage ourselves more than ever by a barefaced wheel, without at all diminishing our danger. And then a thought strikes the whole of us together as it were. "Suppose we make no open show or profession of resistance at all, and say nothing about the intensity with which we wish him at Jericho, or any other locality; nay, suppose we still sit among his admirers and backers. Then, if on some indifferent subject, such as a local taxation question, an education measure, or a clause of a ballot scheme, we treat him to a quiet stab, we may give him his *quietus*, enjoy our revenge, and put a stop to robbery without exhibiting any animus at all."

Now the above illustrates the frame of mind into which we conceive a large number of the Ministerial party to have been driven. Mr. Gladstone has acted as a sort of agent, whose business consisted in listening to everybody's representations against everybody, and in causing everybody, by his dark say-

ings, to dread the loss of everything. His party are barred from open hostility by the pledges which they have given, and the professions which they have made; but the necessities of the case prescribe a little quiet rattening, and so he is beaten occasionally, and we see him puzzled to discover whence the blows can come, while he stands surrounded by a phalanx of devoted friends. As from a hawk in difficulties, the sparrows pluck a feather from him whenever they get a chance of doing so without attracting much observation; and though they may never, perhaps, set themselves against him in undissembling array, they will wheel and swoop over him with much quiet delight, when at length they shall have pecked him to death.

It would seem, moreover, that Mr. Gladstone, great as is his zeal in destroying, has never been accepted by the destructive party as a thoroughly naturalised Radical. There is something about him which to their practised eyes shows him not to be of the true breed, and to the end of his present convictions, perhaps, he may never be received as other than a suspected agent, who may desert at some important moment. It is true that one of the flourishes used by Mr. Gladstone when he joined hands with Mr. Bright and proclaimed a thorough Radical policy, was that he had "burned his boats;" the meaning, we presume, being that he had frankly and unequivocally adopted certain principles from which it was morally impossible that he could recede. This from the mouths of some men might have a meaning, but it had no meaning coming from Mr. Gladstone's mouth. A man who is known to be of stable mind and thoroughly to be relied on, may for a time hesitate as to which side he will take on certain questions. He

hesitates, and makes no secret of his hesitation, being free for the time to decide either way. But at last he decides, takes his line, makes an open profession of faith, and so unmistakably hoists his colours that it is morally impossible for him to desert them; that is to say, his consistency and firmness are known to be such, and his character for sincerity is so high, that he may be relied on not to waver now that he has made his choice; and so absolutely has he bound himself in a moral sense, that he may be compared to those who, having burnt their boats after landing on a foreign strand, have made retreat from thence a physical impossibility. But it will be observed that the force of the metaphor in this case is derived from the strength of mind and the known loyalty of the person to whom it is applied. It rests on character. The person supposed can no more break his word, or recant his deliberately adopted opinions, than a man without a vessel can embark on the ocean. But what force can there be in the expression "burnt his boats," when it is applied to the acts of a man known to be fickle, and capable of the very greatest degree of tergiversation? What are Mr. Gladstone's boats? What is there now to bind him irrevocably to Radicalism which there was not before to bind him to Conservatism? And yet he apostatised from Conservatism; what assurance have we that he may not in the same way, when it suits him, apostatise from Radicalism? In what way is he bound: how can he burn his boats? There are some strong symptoms that arguments like these occur to the extreme Radical party, who do not feel sure that Mr. Gladstone is working wholly in their interests, and who know there is a risk of his some day giving them the slip.

"For treason is but trusted like the fox;
Who, ne'er so tame, so cherished, and
locked up,
Will have a wild trick of his ancestors."

Part of their distrust is owing, no doubt, to the impossibility of Mr. Gladstone, or of any rational man, fulfilling the expectations which had been raised by the boasting and promising in 1868. The error was in making the promises, not in being unable to fulfil them. And this error arose in great measure from ignorance and presumption; but we cannot wholly account for it even in this way. For instance, there is a party in the State to whom mere reduction of public expenditure is always grateful. It does not matter to them what future evils we may expose ourselves to, nor whether the mischief is to occur ten, or five years, or one year hence. They like to save for saving's sake, regardless of consequences. Now Mr. Gladstone, green as he was and is in the things of the world, had at any rate known a minister's responsibility, and must have been well aware that to satisfy the expectations of this party was out of the question. He never said, it is true, that he would pursue economy regardless of every other consideration; but he undertook to produce efficiency with economy, which was an equally chimerical promise, and which had the effect of temporarily gaining him support from two parties, both of whom were sure to be disappointed and angry before long. Those who desired efficiency, knowing that it must be expensive, flattered themselves, probably, that the new Government, once in power, would feel committed to the efficiency, at any rate, and would soon forget about economy. The economists, on the other hand, plainly believed that efficiency was thrown in only as a sop to another section, and that they were going to have

a Government with which a low expenditure should be the paramount consideration. (Mr. Vernon Harcourt, in the winter, threw light upon the expectations of this party when he proposed that the expenses of Government should be arbitrarily fixed at a certain sum, and the wants of Government be supplied therefrom as best they might.) Now, although the hook may have been cleverly baited for procuring votes and obtaining office, it was inevitable that the trick should be discovered, to the disgust of both parties: so this short-sighted policy—which we cannot acquit Mr. Gladstone of having deliberately adopted, though he knew it to be deceitful—is now bearing fruit in the snarlings and occasional snaps of the disappointed sections. These men feel that they have been deceived; and although the advocates of a fixed low expenditure have no hope that they may gain what they desire by a change of Ministry, yet they cannot refrain from venting their chagrin on those who have taken them in.

We may add to these malcontents the men who have deceived themselves by a false estimate of the abilities of the present Government. This is not a failure to be laid at the door of Ministers themselves; because it is only natural for men to exhibit themselves in the best possible light. They managed, no doubt, to persuade many men who were above being caught by specious cries, that they really possessed the qualities necessary for vigorous and successful government. These men, besides being dissatisfied on public grounds, have the mortification of feeling that the Ministers' failure is an imputation on their own judgment; and this naturally does not tend to make them over indulgent to the blunders and neglects. They, however,

deceived themselves, or were ready to be deceived; and to turn round upon the persons who have disappointed them, would be to discredit their own recent words and acts. They therefore, as yet, yield a sullen general support to the Government, relieving their feelings by an occasional vicious thrust.

And so, between beatings and revivals, our Ministers contrive so far to drag along a not very dignified existence. And their struggles for life may be said to have constituted the sum of home politics up to the middle of June; for at that time the work which ought to have been done, but which had been left undone, because the Government was weak, and always in hot water, was prodigious. The estimates and supplies seemed to have gone clean out of recollection. The loan for buying and building Militia Barracks, in order that the new system of localising the Army might be carried out, the Public Health Bill, Mines Regulation Bill, Corrupt Practices at Elections Bill, were all still waiting, and the possibility of their all being this year passed into Acts had already disappeared. The weak and useless Ballot Bill, which might well have been postponed, had been, with much labour, worked through the Commons; the Royal Parks and Gardens Bill, as revised by Mr. Guedalla, had been passed by both Houses; and one or two other measures of minor importance had become law. But there had really been no legislation of moment. The management of the House of Commons had been confessedly bad; and equally bad was the choice of measures for priority of consideration. The Public Health Bill, which is of consequence to everybody, and the necessary provision for the Army, were postponed in favour of the Ballot Bill, which nobody wanted.

If, however, the work of the Legislature be not likely to aid much in promoting purity of election, the late decision of an Irish judge cannot fail of an improving effect. It is a happy coincidence that the county Galway election petition should have been heard and decided during the passage of the Ballot Bill through Parliament. Thinking men can scarcely fail to remark, that we have with great ingenuity been labouring to remove molehills on this side of St. George's Channel, while on the other side mountains have been left to block the course of freedom. Surely some of the zeal which has been so urgent to make the English freeman vote in darkness, might have been more profitably employed in dispelling some of the darkness which has overhung Irish electioneering, and in checking the monstrous iniquity that has been perpetrated under cover of it. The existence of such iniquity was notorious; but it could not successfully be dealt with, because the Liberals, the very party that was so solicitous for English purity, discouraged all attempts to suppress priestly tyranny—and why? because an unrighteous and unnatural alliance has for long existed between the Liberal party and the Roman Catholic priesthood, and because priestly intimidation generally operated so as to bring support to the Liberal party in the House of Commons. It is to the courageous impartiality of Mr. Justice Keogh that we are indebted for first showing to us that this mighty evil is tangible. The proceedings in his court must, if fairly considered, force the conviction that in a majority of cases Irish members are not returned by the free voices of the electors; and that many of the constituencies are neither more nor less than instruments with which priestcraft achieves its political ends. As long as the priests can pack the

House of Commons with their agents, what a farce is it to talk about a Parliament that shall represent the true and independent sentiment of the three kingdoms! Now, if it be not an established fact, it is a widely received opinion, that a compact exists between Mr. Gladstone's Government and the Irish priesthood. If there be such a compact, we see now one of the springs from which Mr. Gladstone's majority in the Commons has proceeded. Granting that there is a compact expressed or understood, the majority has been in great measure owing to outrageous conduct, such as the evidence given before Mr. Justice Keogh, and the bold decision of that judge, have brought to light. Intimidation and coercion of the most infamous kind, bodily harm, bodily fear, withdrawal of religious offices from the sound and sick, cursings, and the prospect of spiritual ruin—these have been the means used in the county Galway; and we may fairly conclude that they have been unsparingly used in other counties and boroughs. In the Galway case, an archbishop, two bishops, and fifty or sixty priests conspired to procure, by the above illegal and cruel means, the return of their adopted candidate. This is the sort of influence against which an ignorant elector has to shield himself if he can. When the same elector makes a bargain for the lease of land, so tenderly does the law commiserate his simplicity, and the advantage which his tyrannical landlord possesses over him, that it steps in to defend him from the legitimate penalties of his own open and deliberately accepted bargain, making the enforcement of the covenant penal on the landlord. Can the law do nothing to shelter him from this crushing spiritual tyranny which walks in daylight? Is the law to be his dry-nurse, as it were, against the wiles and the power of the landlord, and yet to leave him

naked to the demoniacal arts of the priest? The ballot, be it remembered, will afford no defence against these arts. It may protect from temporal vindictiveness, but will be no safeguard against spiritual retribution. One of the reverend comminators, by the way, seems to propose to use an admixture of temporal and spiritual apprehensions, as means of binding his victims to his purpose. Independently of the awful penalty at long date which is to be incurred by voting in opposition to clerical dictation, he proposes to use the confessional as a means of ascertaining speedily how each man may have voted; and this, we may be sure, means that any offender is to be denounced and punished in this present world.

The names and standing in the Church of the persons reported by the judge, warrant us in assuming that this has been no exceptional case referable to local bigotry or intolerance, but that it is an organised conspiracy, aspiring to control the Legislature itself by abuse of spiritual influence and resort to nefarious devices. It is remarkable that at the ecclesiastical meeting held under the presidency of Cardinal Cullen, as a demonstration by way of answer to the judge's accusation, little attempt was made to exculpate the bishops and clergy; the key-note of the meeting was, "How shall this daring judge be punished?" as if the idea of punishment overtaking the right reverend and reverend transgressors was quite out of the question. And this impudence may have been politic, for no one doubts that in their generation these children of darkness are wise enough. It is to be hoped, though, that impudence will not serve their turn this time, and that conviction will be brought home to every one of the guilty, great and small. Nothing short of this, we fancy, will satisfy the people of this country.

But these scandalous transactions may be looked upon in another light besides as acts destroying purity of election. They are the practices of those for whose gratification no sacrifice has been thought too great by our present rulers. These are the men who were to be propitiated by the destruction of the Protestant Church in Ireland. It was for them (for what need is there to speak of their poor tools the voters?) it was for them, to soothe their envy, and to minister to their vengeance, that the Church of England was shorn of its chief branch. The reward which their turbulence and agitation procured for them was not likely to damp their efforts in the same direction; and the immense concession which, as we were told, was to tranquillise Ireland, was calculated to produce a directly opposite result, as is proved by the events in Galway which we are discussing. Is the sophistry of Mr. Gladstone, or the finger of Mr. Justice Keogh, the more likely to indicate where the Upas-tree really is, and what it is that should have been cut down? To sacrifice the Protestant Church was to dig about and nourish the poison-tree.

We need not inform our readers that we do not make use of the accusation of a hostile or a prejudiced person as ground for these remarks. Mr. Justice Keogh is himself a member of the Roman Catholic Church, and therefore any prepossession or sympathy of his may be presumed to have been towards, and certainly not against, the reverend accused, whom his duty has compelled him to expose. He has evidently been shocked and scandalised by such rude and wicked practices having prevailed within the communion to which he belongs; but having found that they did ex-

ist, he has been true to his duty and honour in denouncing them with all his eloquence.

Ministers appear disposed to stifle debate on the report of the Megæra Commission; but we trust that it will take place in spite of them. The loss of the Megæra and other disasters ought to be sifted to the bottom. The parsimony of the Admiralty is once more likely to be condemned by the public voice as the cause of all of them; for, since the replies given by Mr. Goschen and others in the House of Commons, Lord Clarence Paget has reiterated his former remarks in a pamphlet,* which goes more closely into the subject than his letters to the 'Times.' The argument of it tends to prove that the instructions of the Admiralty so rigidly insisted upon the saving of coal, although they did not expressly prohibit the use of it on all occasions, that there is every reason to fear that captains may, in deference to these instructions, have refrained from steaming even at times when their judgments told them that steam ought to be used. Whether the use of steam would have saved the Agincourt, the Lord Clyde, and others from grounding, and whether it would have saved the ill-fated Captain, is a question that we will not take upon us to decide. Lord Clarence Paget—no mean authority—thinks that it might. "These are my reasons," he writes, "for believing that on that fatal night the Captain capsized because she had not steam to keep her under command of her helm; and that had she been under such command, she would, in all probability, have been luffed to the wind and saved." In the case of the Agincourt, his Lordship proves first that there was a strong cross-current sweeping the fleet into the

* *An Examination into the Causes of the late Naval Disasters.* By Admiral Lord Clarence Paget. London: John Murray, Albemarle Street. 1872.

Mediterranean : he then goes on to say :—

"The effect of the want of necessary speed will now be shown. The starboard column being nearest to the Pearl Rock, was much more influenced by this cross-current than the port line, which was out in the main stream; and the evidence on the court-martial clearly and distinctly proves that the Agincourt, which was the leading ship of the starboard column, was actually obliged to keep her helm considerably to starboard in order to counteract this cross-current. It also shows that at the time of her disaster she was beyond her regulated distance of four cables' length from the flag-ship—in fact, she had been insensibly drawn in by this cross-current, and the act of striking the rock can only be described as sideling on to it, because she had not way enough to overcome the cross-current."

No time, assuredly, ought to be lost before examining into the general question whether in certain not very unusual circumstances the power of suddenly increasing the speed should not always be at the service of the navigator—that is to say, whether steam should not always be ready, and the power of using it confided to the discretion of the captain, or other officer to whom he may think it desirable to delegate it. After this question is settled there will not be much difficulty in determining whether the husbanding of the coal was the probable cause of the disasters to the Captain, Agincourt, &c.—in other words, whether "economy with efficiency" means the capsizing and stranding of ships of war, which take a long time to construct, and which are of enormous value. There is a further question involved—namely, that of justice to our naval officers, many of whom (indeed the same may be said of the whole service) are under a cloud by reason of so many misfortunes. If these gallant men have suffered, not for any incapacity or neglect of theirs, but because the Admiralty

denied them the means of exercising their skill and abilities, it concerns every one that the fact should be known and recognised. The public will, we feel assured, unanimously respond to the following appeal of the gallant author of the pamphlet :—

"I frankly, and in considerable detail, represented the case to Mr. Goschen, pointing out the dangers of the present system, not only as regards the safety of our ships, but likewise the credit of our officers; and failing to elicit from him what I thought, and still think, was due to the many distinguished men whose prospects have been blighted, whose career has been cut short, and whose useful services are lost to the country, I was driven to throw myself upon the public, and to challenge the discussion now going on."

Since the lure of efficiency with economy was first broached, we have never ceased to express our apprehension that it would be found to mean want of efficiency accompanied by great waste. If Lord C. Paget's views be correct, this apprehension will be found to have been only too just as regards the Navy. The loss of the *Megara* and Captain, though not set forth in the year's estimates, is none the less a serious expence to the country, not to dwell upon the hundreds of valuable lives that were risked in the one and destroyed with the other; and the loss of our sailors' prestige is one of which we cannot calculate the disadvantages. The manner in which the important Army measures are kept back until the very end of the season suggests that they also may lead to disagreeable discussions which it is in a Ministerial sense wise to postpone until Parliament shall be tired out. We trust that the public will watch these matters of expenditure narrowly, imitating the attitude of Mr. Disraeli, who, according to Lord Granville, watches Mr. Gladstone like a cat. And we would remark

en passant, that we very much approve of the figure which his lordship used, not so much for what it says as for the sly comparison which it does not express, but which is necessarily included in it. The *jeu d'esprit* does not refer to Mr. Disraeli alone. It is complex. Cats do not watch men. If we regard Mr. Disraeli as a cat on the watch, we must form some figurative idea of the object of his watchfulness. Now a cat is not unfrequently seen watching a rat, and when we think of this, Lord Granville's joke is complete, and one perceives the delicate point of the allusion. We pass over the broad political meaning which has been given to the term "rat" as not requiring to be fitted by us to Mr. Gladstone's figure, and look at other resemblances. Your rat now is one of the most destructive creatures in creation; nothing useful or valuable is safe from its assaults. It is excessively fond of concealment and mystery; and when any of its proceedings are unavoidably visible, it so cunningly manages matters as to completely puzzle the observer. It grubs incessantly in the dark, and it is remarkable that, when its subterranean galleries chance to be found and examined, they appeared to lead to nothing, but to compose a maze useless except for the pleasure of making it. Finally, we know the impure localities which the rat frequents, and we know Mr. Gladstone's proneness to "descend into the gutter." Altogether, considering the fineness of the sarcasm, and the clever way in which it was introduced under cover of a pointless sneer at Mr. Disraeli, it is by far the smartest thing which Lord Granville has uttered since he has been a Minister.

We stated last month our opinion that the Lords would hardly think it incumbent on them to reject the Ballot Bill if it should again be passed by a respectable majority in

the Commons; and there can be no little doubt that their Lordships, though by no means approving (as how should they?) this uncalled-for piece of legislation, will nevertheless sanction it. Henceforth, unless the Lower House should refuse to concur in the Lords' amendments, Englishmen will vote in secret for members of the House of Commons. The question, How will this affect the representation? is a most important one; but we have scarce any reliable data on which to ground an opinion and frame an answer. As to what members apprehend, some information may be gained from the known dislike felt towards the ballot by many of its ostensible supporters. Open consistent hostility may be based, and we hope is based, on high public considerations; but this secret dislike seems to argue an instinctive dread very prevalent among the Liberal party, that there are many of them whose re-election the ballot will not favour. We must wait patiently now to learn what the system will bring forth, since there is no escaping the experiment—as far as any action of ours is concerned, that is; but as we write, there comes intelligence which may possibly cause the work of the session to be arrested.

We alluded in the paragraph above to the announcement that a proposal had been made by our Foreign Minister to the American Government, inviting the joint action of the President and her Majesty to effect an adjournment of the meeting of the arbitrators at Geneva, from 15th June 1872 for eight months, that is, to 15th February 1873. This proposal is an admission that the ill-directed labour of our Cabinet has come to nought; it is also an announcement that, if the will of our Ministers is to prevail, we have before us eight months of altercation to be carried on with the same want of ability that has

characterised the past negotiations ; that the Treaty and the contentions arising out of it are to be left in a doubtful and unsatisfactory stage during the Presidential election of the United States ; that Parliament is to be prorogued in August without the anxiety of this country in respect of the Treaty being to any extent relieved ; and that at the commencement of the session of 1873, there is to be a repetition of the mysteries, evasions, hair-breadth escapes, and disappointments with which we are now so familiar.

It is, of course, a possible consequence of this failure to bring the negotiations to an issue, that the Gladstone Ministry may be driven at once from office. It is a consequence which nothing but absolute necessity could justify, because the work of the session is in such a state of backwardness, that a change of Ministry (which means a general election) during the summer would require a long autumnal session of Parliament. On the other hand, we may have to consider—supposing the negotiations for arbitration to be not altogether broken off—how, while Ministers remain on sufferance in office to finish the routine work of the year, they can be restrained from further complicating the unlucky misunderstanding with America. While we wait for light to fall on this problem, the conduct of our Government gives us much matter for reflection. Everything about the telegraphic communication by which this grave business has been transacted, gives evidence of haste and distraction. After the House of Commons had met for despatch of business, and while it was awaiting a promised communication from the Government on the 11th of June, a Cabinet Council was actually sitting within the walls of the Palace of Westminster, in hurry and confusion determining how the last received

message should be regarded, and how it should affect the information to be given to Parliament. Nothing more inconsistent with decorum and dignity could have occurred if a victorious enemy had been at the gates of London. Will our people tolerate that their dearest interests shall be disposed of in such a way as this ! Again, so distracted had Ministers been that they were unaware of the publication, on its return by telegraph from America, of a despatch written by Lord Granville to Mr. Fish on the 9th June—the despatch, in fact, which contains the proposal for adjournment of the arbitration—although, of course, it was in the hands of different members. According to his usual craft and mystery, Mr. Gladstone made a vague statement, containing, in fact, no information at all concerning the condition of the negotiations ; but he kept back the really important information contained in the telegram which had been sent back from America as above stated. The impolicy (to say nothing of the moral error) of habitual deception, and of the perfunctory performance of important business in circumstances of hurry and excitement, received a good illustration in this incident. It was no doubt the disturbed mental condition in which Mr. Gladstone had been all day which hindered him from knowing how the 'Daily News' had exposed his secret doings ; and it was his wily Jesuitical nature which, presuming upon the whole of the House of Commons being in the dark as to the despatch, led him to keep back part of the truth while affecting to make a clean breast. When Mr. Gladstone shall go out of office, as he shortly will, will he do so maintaining the same character for probity and sincerity which he enjoyed when he became a Minister ? It strikes us that many who suspected

his incapacity accepted him without question, because of the probity and candour which they believed to be in him impregnable by any force of circumstances. For our own part, we repeat what we have said before, that when we long ago foresaw the wreck that Mr. Gladstone would make of Government, we did not believe that the trials of office would cause him to give way morally as he has done, or to exhibit himself to the world in phases which were formerly believed to be so foreign to his character. To return to Lord Granville's letter, it was transmitted *en clair*—that is to say, not in the cipher which usually veils diplomatic telegrams, and hence the ability of "enterprise" in America to get possession of its meaning, and to send it back to our press. Now, the most charitable explanation of this want of caution is, that Lord Granville was in such haste that the operation of writing his despatch in cipher could not be waited for; the alternative supposition would be that Lord Granville or the American Minister had been deliberately careless. Every way, then, there is evidence that this momentous correspondence has been conducted in indecent haste—in a manner, in short, in which no statesman who was aware of his responsibilities and alive to the dignity of this country would have dared to conduct it. But ere we leave this subject of the telegram we wish to do justice to a witticism of Mr. Osborne which the House of Commons, intent on absorbing matter, seems to have missed. Mr. Gladstone, after he had been brought to account concerning the despatch of the Foreign Secretary,

stated among other things that the said despatch had not been transmitted in cipher. He then went on to say, "That is the statement made to me, and I have nothing more to communicate on that part of the subject." Whereupon Mr. Osborne rose and said, "Not in cipher?"* Mr. Gladstone understood, or pretended to understand, this question to be an invitation to him to say over again what he had said before, and he accordingly repeated that the despatch was transmitted *en clair*, and went on with some more oracular revelation, and nobody laughed at Mr. Osborne's interruption. We, however, cannot doubt that Mr. Osborne's question had reference to the words of Mr. Gladstone which it immediately followed—namely, the words, "I have nothing more to communicate," &c.; and that Mr. Osborne asked if he had nothing more to communicate in cipher, or in that covert, obscure fashion in which he had been before mystifying the House. The joke was out of season, no doubt, and perhaps did not deserve recognition, but then jesters are notoriously not respecters of proprieties.

It is no surprise to us, neither will it be a surprise to our readers, to find that the arbitration plan has broken down. From the first we saw that the proceedings of our Government in bringing about the Treaty were full of error, although we heartily desired that a peaceful solution of the dispute might be found; and we pointed out, before the commencement of the present session of Parliament,† the unfitness of the question at issue, vague and unlimited as it was, for arbitration, and the probable miscarriage of the

* The 'Times' reporter evidently took our view, because in the report of the 'Times' Mr. Osborne's remark is printed with a note of interrogation after it; had Mr. Osborne simply echoed Mr. Gladstone's words in a tone of disappointment or surprise, the echo would have been followed by a note of exclamation.

† See 'Blackwood's Magazine' for February 1872, art. "The Reasonable Fears of the Country."

scheme. Want of natural discernment, and want of the experience which might have corrected the other deficiency, were, both in the Ministers at home and in the Commissioners whom they employed, the causes of the miscarriage: overweening conceit and presumption in Ministers caused them to rush thus disqualified into such an unfortunate negotiation. There can be but little doubt that Mr. Gladstone, in treating with the United States, aimed at something more than simply putting an end to a disagreeable dispute: he expected to do the thing with extreme cleverness, and so to earn great applause for himself and his method. This is deducible, not only from his great eagerness to negotiate, but from his inability to keep quiet after the precious Treaty had been made. The people did not break forth into ecstasies of delight; and so the Premier, by way of leading the acclamations, conferred a great honour on the President of the baffled Commission, as a managing mountebank commends his rusty merry-andrew in order to attract credit upon his whole establishment. Nevertheless, there was no response. On the contrary, men began to canvass the merits of the lucky bungler whom Mr. Gladstone delighted to honour, and to ask, "Would a discerning Minister have intrusted a delicate negotiation to such hands at all? would any but a vainglorious Minister have, with premature complacency, trumpeted his own fancied achievement by conferring such a reward?" But the hand of Fortune was apparent in this business; and Fortune had laid her plans well, as she always does, and expressly provided for her purpose a Minister thoroughly undiscerning, egotistical, and unscrupulous. So we had a telling lesson to show how superior are the gifts of Fortune to those of Nature. Nature, it is true, is often liberal,

sometimes profusely bountiful; but with her gift comes the necessity for using it. She enforces hard toil; a life, perhaps, of devotion; and a long waiting for reward—oftentimes a disappointment of the reward altogether, and—

"The fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind fury with the abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life."

He to whom Nature has given largely must give again—must pass on, as it were, her gift for the benefit of many before benefit can be reflected on himself. But how different is it with him whom Fortune condescends to favour! She exacts no labour, no self-denial; she requires no merit, no capacity even for doing well; on the contrary, she delights in showering her benefits on the undeserving and incapable. She takes pleasure in showing how she, of mere wantonness, can do unconditionally what Nature does on such hard terms. Let none neglect the worship of Fortune. It may be well to possess philosophy enough to bear calmly her departure if she should flee on swift pinions; but let us all join heartily in the "*laudo manentem*," for she is a great goddess!

Well, Mr. Gladstone has not gained applause: his chagrin is probably extreme; and if he should count up the additions to his reputation since he became Prime Minister, he must see that there has been some great defect in either himself or the public—in the public, of course, he will say. But he must remember that the public is not quite blind, and that it cannot help seeing things that are kept persistently before its view. If the Premier wanted to escape the deliberate ken of the people, why didn't he, when he saw that he had made a mess of his fine Treaty, smuggle it

out of sight with all despatch, and start some novelty that might have a chance of succeeding better? That is the approved play of people who angle for admiration. Why did he, by his hammering and tinkering at the bad work which was clearly irreparable, rivet attention to his failure till everybody became not only cognisant of the blunders but sick of the subject? Why did he so many times announce an immediate success, without sufficient ground for expecting it? Above all, why didn't he bestow upon his own flesh and blood some of the confidences which he let gush in such drenching jets on the Americans? A modest acknowledgment that he had got out of his depth, an unloading of his grief, and appeal for support to the British Parliament, would at any stage of the tangle have brought him *en rapport* with his countrymen. But he persisted in keeping their sympathy at a distance; he went floundering on, more jealous apparently of their following his imbecile moves than hopeful of a good result, and so wantonly veiling his proceedings that Parliament was forced into the reflection—

“ While these do labour for their own preferment,
Behoves it us to labour for the realm.”

And nothing but the fallacious assurances which he gave of success close at hand prevented the legislative bodies from wresting the conduct of the negotiation out of his hands, and tearing away the veil behind which the mountain was understood to be in labour. The people might have forgiven up to Whitsuntide, we say, but will they forgive now? The juggle was so exquisite, forsooth, that a glance from profane eyes would have spoiled it. Well, we all see now what it was, and can't for our lives understand what harm would have been caused

by our being permitted to inspect it before. We might have abruptly ended the game, perhaps, but there would have been no harm in that. Now the Americans have ended it. Their public men went their ways, and would listen no longer to our wise charmers, who, when they cry to us in their distress, may find that the appeal is made too late.

The general efficacy of arbitration in international matters is a subject on which the greatest diversity of opinion exists, the holders of extreme persuasions maintaining on the one side that nothing can be simpler or more satisfactory than to refer any disagreement to the judgment of an unprejudiced court; and on the other side, that the determination of the powers of the arbitrators, and of the scope of the arbitration, gives rise to a multitude of new contentions, creating an insoluble network of subtleties where before there was a tolerably simple issue. But most of us will agree that, once it may have been determined to refer any case to arbitration, it is greatly to be desired that the dispute should be ended by that means. How sincerely then must all sides deplore the misfortune by which a reference so important and so notorious as that on the Alabama Claims was undertaken on the part of England by Mr. Gladstone's Government! Arbitration will possibly be a by-word and a hissing for long time to come through this mischance; and yet, fairly speaking, there has been nothing new proved against it. It broke down through no defect inherent in itself, as far as we can see, but because it happened to be worked by persons who would have equally brought discredit upon war or diplomacy. That it has appeared to disadvantage when tampered with by the unwise, ought surely to be no great reproach to a method; and yet we fear that the handling of Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues

will cause the method of arbitration to be condemned for many a day. How weak and contemptible the action of our Ministers is, may be learned from the treatment they received from the American President and Ministers, who, while the English Cabinet was urgent for further correspondence, broke up their sittings at Washington and dispersed. They, no doubt, were worn out by the pertinacity and undignified pleadings of men who would not take an answer, and who sought by reiteration and importunity to obtain results which had already been decidedly and deliberately refused. No one, so far as we know, has thought of complaining of this behaviour of the American officials as wanting in courtesy to England: on the contrary, we all seem to feel that the unstatesman-like solicitations of our Ministers were quite beyond what human nature could be expected to bear, and that the wonder was how American patience held out so long as it did.

Our consolation for the failure of the Arbitration must be that the feeling which produced the Alabama Claims is fast dying away in America before the influence of a growing national judgment. These claims were originally the expression of a suspicion, generated by the partisan demonstrations of strong adherents of the South in this country, and strengthened by the incautious utterances of Mr. Gladstone and others—that England's neutrality during the civil war was a mere pretence, that she really sided with the Southern States, and in what she did, and what she left undone, wrought for the disadvantage of the North. Nothing, perhaps, is so irritating as cold impartiality to combatants who have thrown themselves into a strife with their whole hearts. It was intolerable that England should not with one voice condemn the South as vehemently as the

North did. But happily the reflection of six years has modified the irritation, and convinced many Americans that this country never was hostile, as they had supposed, and that the extravagant claims, which were a measure of their resentment rather than of our unfairness, were a mistake. This became apparent when the feeling of America was tested by the many squabbles which grew out of the Treaty. Now, it is certain that, as long as there should have continued the disposition to vindictively make claims against Great Britain, to settle this, or that class of claims would have been merely to scotch the snake; the same feeling which produced the first demands would have been fertile to invent others. On the other hand, if the unkindly feeling which was at the bottom of all the altercation be materially diminished, it is of far less consequence whether the claims be definitely settled or no. There is strong reason for hoping that Mr. Gladstone's exploit will not be followed by war. Tall talking, of course, there will be during the Presidential election; but the idea of war with Great Britain is not nearly so popular as it used to be; and it is quite possible that from some sections the British alliance may be the password. The contempt and ridicule with which our statesmen are regarded on the other side the water, would soon be modified if we should once more show that we had firm heads in our councils and firm hands at our work. The voices of those who on both sides have looked at this great question of amicable relations, as affecting posterity and affecting the world, will, we trust, be heard still above the screams of faction, and continue to operate until the sentiments of the two nations shall be brought into harmony. But it is essential to any good end that the present Ministry be got rid of. If we

should persist in retaining for any length of time a Government which the Americans have learned to despise, their contempt would soon justly be extended from the rulers to the whole nation. But this will not be. Parliament, though unwilling to interfere, has from the beginning of this year shown its appreciation of all that has been going on. It has not hesitated to express suspicion of the capacity and leanings of Ministers from time to time, nor will it, when all need for reserve shall be over, refrain from the action necessary for showing that the whole of this nation is not at the low level of the Ministry, and that we can still produce statesmen able to maintain our honour before America and all the world.

To the Treaty of Washington we owe the new and interesting doctrine lately propounded by Mr. M. Bernard, that "less accurate" language may sometimes be very proper for use in international covenants. We must guard ourselves, however, against being supposed to use the term "less accurate" here for "ambiguous" or "equivocal;" because Mr. Bernard has taken the trouble to write a letter to the 'Times,' pointing out that he does not attach those meanings to the words "less accurate." We much regret that Mr. Bernard did not in the same letter state what meaning he does attach to those words. Be his meaning what it may, Mr. Bernard contends that "we constantly use less exact expressions for the sake of brevity or convenience, often for the sake of politeness, without any ambiguity at all. Language which leaves no reasonable doubt as to the speaker's meaning cannot reasonably be called ambiguous or equivocal, but very often indeed it is not the most accurate that could be chosen." Very good, Mr. Bernard, but how if it be language which does leave a reasonable

doubt of the speaker's meaning? Less accurate language may or may not leave such reasonable doubt. When Mrs. Gamp, in answer to an observation of Mrs. Prig, used the words, "aperiently I am," though the language was "less accurate," the meaning hardly admitted of a doubt, although possibly an American physiologist might have raised a quibble even here. But the language of the Treaty of Washington, when weighed by grave statesmen and acute lawyers, has been found to suggest reasonable doubts as to the meaning; and the moral we should draw therefrom is that "less accurate" language in documents of importance is wholly and utterly to be condemned. We quite grant that for the sake of brevity, or convenience, or politeness, we often do prefer less accurate expressions; but then it is always in cases where the brevity, or convenience, or politeness is of more account than accuracy. Surely in state papers accuracy may not be sacrificed to brevity or convenience or politeness without the greatest culpability on the part of those who draw the documents; at least this is our opinion, seeing by the old light. If our solicitor, for the sake of either of the objects named, were to use less accurate language in an instrument which thereby failed to secure us our rights, it is highly probable that we should withdraw all further claims, direct or indirect, on his professional services. And a treaty, which is an international legal instrument, would seem to require to be as strictly worded as an ordinary indenture. The only defence we ever heard of the tautology, wearying particularities, and endless repetition of a law parchment, was this apparently very sound one, that any expenditure of words was preferable to allowing the exact meaning and intention of the whole

or of any part to remain questionable. It is clear, nevertheless, that among the endless changes of the world, a "less accurate" school is pressing into notice, of which Mr. Gladstone is *facile princeps*, and Mr. Bernard an ingenious supporter. Who hates not Mr. Gladstone's enigmas may favour Mr. Bernard's less accurate expressions, and the same may yoke foxes or milk billy-goats! They who cling to the old-fashioned desire of doing their work well, will yet walk in the ancient ways; but a man who wishes to create eternal perplexities and to be made a marquis, may profitably adopt Mr. Bernard's views. This proviso should, however, be included in the foregoing proposition, that if a power greater than Mr. Gladstone should suddenly assert its rights, and speak its mind concerning not the Treaty only, but several "less accurate" statements which it has had to listen to of late, the advantage of following Mr. Bernard's rule would probably not be so apparent. John Bull has been living for some time among things generally "less accurate" than he approves: it can surprise no one if he desires a change.

As we have never seen the causes and understandings which led to the ever-to-be-deplored use of this less accurate language explained by any hypothesis able to cover all the statements that have been made by both sides, and consistent with the known facts, we venture to put forward a supposition of our own. It will be recollected how vehemently Mr. Gladstone contended that the Treaty did not include the Indirect Claims, and how Sir Stafford Northcote publicly asserted that the Commissioners had the best reason for believing that the language of the Treaty was understood by both sides to exclude these Indirect Claims; on the other hand, all remember how the American Commissioners and Ministers affirmed that they never

understood the Indirect Claims to be excluded. Now the problem is to imagine a case which is reconcilable with these opposite statements, and which explains the manifest repugnance shown on both sides to going at all below the surface of what happened. The first inference which we draw, then, is, that the misunderstanding, the springs of which neither side dares to reveal, commenced with a conspiracy of the Commissioners on both sides, quite comprehended and possibly expressed in some occult document, to use language calculated to mislead the Senate. Hence the less accurate expressions, concerning which, however, the American Commissioners relieved the minds of their British co-labourers by an assurance that it should never in effect subject us to loss by reason of the Indirect Claims. This assurance may have been given altogether *bona fide*, and it will be found to agree with what we have so frequently seen stated on the part of America,—that it had never from the first been expected that any payment would be made by England in respect of the Indirect Claims. But here the misunderstanding began; because whereas the American guarantee meant simply that we should be borne harmless as regarded actual payment, our Commissioners understood it to mean that the Indirect Claims should not be mentioned at all in the "Case." Our side expected that, as soon as the Senate should have been led to approve the Treaty, the mask would be at once thrown off, and the name of the Indirect Claims disappear from all further documents; while, on the other side, it was intended to keep up the farce to the end, studiously preserving the Indirect Claims themselves, though resolved to waive compensation on account of them. If this be the right explanation, it shows how the Commissions on both sides,

while contriving to deceive the Senate, deceived each other; how the deceit which underlay the whole misunderstanding prevented both sides from openly appealing to documents or quoting expressions used; and how *finesse* may often bring its own speedy reward. A Treaty which the American Senate would not pass with a clear understanding of its import should have been regarded from the first as an impracticable Treaty, and so abandoned. The less accurate expressions, if they have had the effect of cheating the Senate, have likewise had the effect of cheating the Commissioners, and of wrecking the negotiation.

"Oh! what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practise to deceive!"

• will be the reflection of every one who may adopt our hypothesis; and the tangled web may be traced, not only in the interminable correspondence and telegrams, but in the shufflings, the concealments, the partial revelations and the grudging confidences of the British Ministers in their communications with the British Parliament. The possibility of any Ministers whatever being allowed for upwards of four months to treat Parliament as it has lately been treated, would have been denied last year. How our Ministers have contrived to carry on such a game, is a puzzle even now. All through the period they have been grievously suspected and treated with suspicion, while they have shown not the slightest desire to remove the ill opinion which they have created. Their existence, and the possibility of their negotiating further, depends on the will of Parliament; and yet Parliament is not thought worth propitiating by the appearance even of treating it with confidence.

The adjournment of the Arbitrators on the 19th June for a week,

makes it improbable that we shall have precise information concerning their action before we go to press. The general expectation appears to be, that either by formally adjourning or by refusing to adjourn they will postpone indefinitely their trial of the Case. It does not matter much in what manner they declare their occupation to be at a standstill; but it matters much whether Parliament may or may not turn to right account the opportunity which will be given for sifting the whole question when the Arbitrators shall pause. It will surely not be permitted to our Ministry to keep Parliament silent and submissive any longer by reopening telegraphic correspondence with the United States, and announcing day by day an immediate satisfactory settlement. We fear that this game may be tried; but Parliament will not be true to the country if it allows the time of prorogation to draw near without making that examination into past negotiations for which the country is anxious, and without taking order to prevent a repetition of the imbecile transactions by which we have been so much damaged. Forbearance has been shown up to the last point at which it is safe. A Conservative Ministry confronted by a Liberal Opposition would doubtless have been run into and had its operations balked long ago. We by no means wish to see Conservatives act as their opponents would have acted; on the contrary, we have been pleased at their patriotic and generous conduct, and have rejoiced to hear the tribute which has been paid to their discretion and moderation. Nevertheless, there is a limit beyond which inaction would be culpable and generosity misplaced; and this limit would now seem to have been reached. The still friendly 'Times' hints that Ministers themselves will hail the coming opportunity of setting them-

selves right with the public, but we have no hope of the kind; we apprehend a recommencement of the mysteries, as we have said above, and that there will be no faithful revelation until they shall be dragged like badgers from their holes. Our hope is in Parliament alone.

While we waited to be informed of the manner in which the Convention at Geneva would proceed, the action taken by the House of Lords for delaying the promotions promised to the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers is indicative of much coming trouble. The ill-considered measure of abolishing Purchase is beginning to bear bitter fruit—beginning, we say, for the legacy of Army disorder which Mr. Cardwell will leave behind him on quitting office has yet to be realised. The argument by which Lord Abinger prevailed to institute further inquiry, and so possibly to delay the changes on which Ministers had decided, was that, by a wholesale promotion of captains in the Ordnance Corps to the rank of major, while no corresponding promotion should take place in those regiments which have been heretofore under the system of Purchase, many captains in the last-named branches would of necessity be superseded. Of course this is a plausible complaint, and a sound one, so far as it shows that some of the captains of Line regiments would have to submit to something disagreeable for the sake of equalising promotion throughout the Service. The Ministerial respondents, and even the military Peers, including the illustrious Duke at the head of the Army, pointed out that the supersession would be but temporary, and that measures were in contemplation to put the whole Service on an equal footing; but they appeared entirely to miss the real convincing answer, which is, that the proposed scheme of promotion involved no

real injustice at all to the Line captains. The captains of Artillery and Engineers may be, indeed in many instances are, junior as *captains* to those over whom they would be promoted; but though junior as captain, they have, as a rule, been longer in the army—they are older soldiers. While the Linesmen went rapidly over their subalterns' service, the Ordnance men languished long in the lowest rank. Therefore, if they were to pass the Linesmen now, it would only be returning the compliment which the Linesmen paid them in times past. Viewed in this way, and when it is seen that Mr. Cardwell intended only to restore the Ordnance officers to a position corresponding to their length of service, the plan which seemed so unfair to the House of Lords loses its apparent injustice. But the cause of a step so unusual as the interference of Parliament with Army Promotion is really to be found in the vacillation and weak action of the War Office. Since the time when Mr. Cardwell promised some promotion to the Ordnance officers—*i.e.*, since the day when the Army Estimates for 1872-3 were introduced into the House of Commons—it is notorious that three or four widely-differing schemes for alleviating the grievances of the Ordnance Corps have been conceived, decided on, pushed so far as to be embodied in warrants which waited only the Royal Signature, and then abandoned. Mr. Cardwell, blown about by doctrines coming from this side and from that, not understanding the case himself, and unable to seize the important points of the arguments set before him, has been dallying with the matter until the Linesmen have taken heart to get up a case, and the Lords have essayed to take the decision out of the weak Minister's hands. A Secretary of State of any force of mind or of will would long ago have promulgated a

warrant, and so put the matter beyond interference; but Mr. Cardwell, first begging for the concurrence of the India Office, then of the Horse Guards, then of the Treasury, and being thwarted by each in turn, showed so much indecision and gave so much opportunity to cavillers, that now he is in the humiliating position of not being allowed to decide the matter at all. The action of the Lords is very like a vote of want of confidence in the Secretary of State for War. We have even heard it said—perhaps very unjustly—that Mr. Cardwell only held out the prospect of these promotions to stop the mouths of objectors to the Army Estimates, and that he will not be sorry that the Lords have deprived him of the power of keeping his word. The only circumstance which, to our mind, supports this ungenerous view, is, that Mr. Cardwell intrusted the defence of his plan to Lord Ripon of Washington, which looked certainly as if he wished the defence to fail. By a statement made by Mr. Cardwell on 20th June, we find that he was hesitating whether to accept or not the action of the Lords as sufficient to prevent his carrying out promotions for which (so he says) the House of Commons has made provision. We should like to know when or how the Commons made this provision, for the promotions do not appear in their proper places in the Army Estimates!

Once more we have to take leave of Mr. Gladstone in his usual circumstances of concealment, mystery, and muddle, doing all he can to dissipate any shred of respect which may yet be felt for him. It is a most distressing reflection that a man of his undoubted abilities should be unable to make himself a reputation. He has been great in destruction; but even though he should

be made to rank with the incendiary of the Temple of Diana, what sort of a reputation would that be? He has performed an unblushing act of tergiversation, going over to the winning side; but this—shame to our nature—has been so frequently done that it hardly confers dishonourable notoriety. A palate-scraping claret is associated with his name, which name men are apt to invoke with their teeth set on edge; and the pleasant beverage may possibly for a time perform for him the same service that the pillar in the King's Dale did for Absalom—but this again is not fame. And the rest of the acts of Mr. Gladstone—how he broke the laws, how he made a Treaty, and how he made a Marquis, duly chronicled though they be—will hardly cause his name to interest posterity. There is surely great contrariety in this, great counteraction of the eternal fitness of things. Given such talents as Mr. Gladstone's, and bodily health and strength to use them, it must require peculiar misapplication of them, and peculiar operation of his intellectual and moral disqualifications, to make him fail of success. Howbeit such failure has been so far the result of Mr. Gladstone's career; and the whole community may find cause for regret that so great ability has done nothing for the public advantage. A recognition of Mr. Gladstone's attainments would mean that accession of knowledge or other great benefit had accrued to the public through their exercise. It is idle to say that there are not a hundred ways in which they might have been exercised to the great gain of the possessor and of his fellow-men. How deplorable, then, has been the blind ambition which led him to single out a career—the career, one may perhaps say, for which he is eminently unfit! To pretend, from mere theoretical knowledge, to con-

trol the Government of a country, practical as this country is—for are we not Philistines, every one to the very marrow?—was not only a wild, but a most unfortunate piece of presumption. The silly doings, the contrary acts, the helpless diplomacy, which we have monthly to complain of, are the consequences of it. And there are consequences which, to Mr. Gladstone's own reputation, are more damaging than those we have named—to wit, the evasions, concealments, misleading representations, subterranean mazes, and questionable expedients, which excite so much comment. The subtleties of Mr. Gladstone's character have been brought out by the necessities of office. In his earlier days they were not often, certainly not habitually, manifested. We not unfrequently found to our cost that Mr. Gladstone had said a great deal more than he ought, but we seldom had to complain of his reticence. When he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, there was an excess of candour and openness about his proceedings: he not only desired to clear away every doubt which Parliament might feel as to his doings, but he was ready to enter into judgment with Tom, Dick, and Harry in the newspapers. He evidently had then the same trust in plain, open dealing which he has now transferred to occult practice. The subterfuges are the expedients of a well-intending, but very weak, mind. The Premier knew not the difficulties and pit-

falls of his office (although he thought that he knew them better than most), and he was innocent of the beaten ways of escape which the trained and experienced have learned as part of their business. If he knew not the thrusts, of course he had never heard of the parries. Hence his childish deceits, his mistrust of Parliament, and his adoption of a policy which is his as opposed to that of the nation. Of course subtlety and insincerity are in his nature; but they would never, probably, have been brought into prominence if he had not sought for and attained a false position. Not many years of life can remain for this erudite man, who, in order that he may make a name for himself, will require to employ them all in some occupation wherein he is fitted to excel. Every season spent in the vain attempt to prove himself a great statesman diminishes appreciably his chances of being favourably known to posterity. Lasting ridicule he may possibly attain to; but nothing better as a statesman. Whatever of good there may be in him has been lost to the world, because he has lent his ear to the promptings of a suicidal ambition. The man who said that he would be Cæsar or nobody, knew well enough that he had all the capacity for being Cæsar: if it is to be Gladstone or Nobody in the line of statesman, the prospects of Nobody are decidedly encouraging.

CHARLES JAMES LEVER.

WE have lost in Charles Lever one of those brilliant and cheering lights, the extinction of which may be said to "eclipse the gaiety of nations." He died of heart disease, at Trieste, on the 1st of June current, in the 63d year of his age. He had been very unwell for some time past, and his dangerous state was well known to his family, and its termination calmly contemplated by himself. His death at last seems to have been painless and peaceful, and had apparently occurred in sleep, without a struggle. His letters latterly bore constant allusion to the broken state of his health, and expressed his conviction that the end was very near at hand; but the very letters which conveyed these melancholy but resigned forebodings were, at the same time, so full of life and fun, that his correspondents could not and hardly can now realise the fact that his bright spirit was so soon to be quenched.

In conversation his cheerfulness was all along unimpaired; and those who saw him at the close in Trieste, sitting with his daughters and one or two friends in his house, or more frequently in his garden, bright, clear, and pleasant as ever, though labouring under the painful struggling breathlessness of that malady which was so soon to prove fatal, will always bear with them a solemn but not at all sad recollection of the last days of Charles Lever. Painful as the end must ever be of those we love, his was such as all of us could wish to see, and none could fail to sympathise with, for the stout fresh-hearted old man of genius, whose tales had gladdened so many of us in our youth, and stimulated all who read to bold and honourable action.

It is now nearly forty years ago since he began to issue that remarkable series of joyous and genial fictions which have filled so many young hearts with so much innocent mirth, and which have flowed forth ever since in a continuous stream without intermission, and without sensible abatement in their vigour and vivacity. Only in our last Number we had occasion to notice his last production, which is distinguished by some of the best excellences of his style. We mean to take an early opportunity of saying again more at length what we think of those 'Harry Lorrequers,' 'Charles O'Malleys,' &c. &c., over whose fun, frolics, and adventures, most active men now of middle age have rejoiced, and in which we are glad to believe our younger friends still heartily delight. We may venture now, however, to mention the 'Dodd Family Abroad' and the 'O'Dowd Papers,' not so generally associated with his name as the novels, but showing that the brilliant novelist was an infinitely deeper thinker than many an essayist of much more solemn pre-

tensions. The 'Dodd Family' presents the best picture that we know of foreign life; and the versatility and variety exhibited in the letters of the different characters will bear comparison with the same features which have always been so much admired in Smollett's best novel. The "O'Dowderies," which first appeared in the pages of this Magazine, are strikingly characteristic of the man and the author. The mixture of wit and wisdom, of good-humour and sarcasm, of Irish wit and English sense, and of knowledge of the world, with that freshness of heart which so seldom survives the attainment of worldly wisdom, is very remarkable, and perhaps unrivalled. The writer makes game of every folly, and unmasks every imposture; and few works will afford more practical instruction in life and everyday conduct, or more assistance in avoiding absurdities, and attaining the golden mean of moderation in sentiment and opinion, than this most readable and entertaining miscellany.

In private life Lever's character was eminently amiable and exemplary. His domestic relations were of the warmest and closest kind, and animated by the strongest mutual affection. With all his wit and power of satire, he never made an enemy; he never said an ill-natured thing; and he secured the friendship of all who knew him, whose friendship was worth obtaining. He had not the disposition which fits a man for making money; but he had that cheerful turn of mind which, as David Hume says, it is more happy to possess than to be born to an estate of £10,000 a-year. His official position in Italy gave him opportunities of showing kindness and hospitality, of which he amply availed himself. His death was such as he had wished it to be,—happening while he was still in full possession of his faculties, and without being subjected to any lengthened suffering, or becoming a weariness to himself, and to the dear ones around him. He has died universally regretted; and his family will meet from all hearts the warmest sympathy and the kindest good wishes for their welfare.

We should do injustice to our own feelings if we did not, in this brief expression of the loss we have sustained, allude to the close friendship which has for years subsisted between Mr. Lever and ourselves, and to the warm cordiality and unbroken harmony which have attended our intercourse throughout.



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A TRUE REFORMER.—PART VI.

CHAPTER XXI.—TO BUSINESS AT LAST.

BUT even the longest winter must come to an end. Parliament was summoned for the 8th of February, and a day or two before that we established ourselves in London. "Better take a furnished house for a season or two," said Mr. Pater-son, "till you see your way, and find out exactly what you want. A house that would suit you very well now, might be inconvenient by-and-by, if you become a great man; besides it is just as well to begin quietly. It is easy enough to expand in your scale of living, the difficulty always is in contracting it." Acting on this sound advice we had secured a small house in the direction of Queen's Gate. My first impulse would have been to settle down somewhere near to Westminster, but I recollected that Lord Palmerston had recommended a walk home as the best sedative after the excitement of debate, so in this view the distance appeared just the proper thing. The house, of which Eva expressed full approval when

we went up to town together to make a final selection, was of the regular London pattern, two rooms to a floor; a comfortable, but gloomy dining-room, with a still more gloomy apartment at the back, to be devoted henceforth to blue-books and business; two drawing-rooms on the first floor, to which the rest of the house had been sacrificed; then came a bedroom and dressing-room; over that a spare room destined for Sybil later in the season, with a little workroom for Eva at the back; while a narrow staircase led from this floor to the servants' rooms at the top, where you could touch the ceiling with your hand, and where they must inevitably be burnt to death on the outbreak of fire. The furniture was good and new, for the original tenant ('something in the city') had only been a short time in occupation. Nobody in the house seemed ever to have written a letter, the appliances for which were wholly wanting, or opened a book; but the addition of a writing-table or two

and some book-shelves completed our arrangements in this respect, and when our books and other belongings were unpacked our new abode began to look sufficiently snug.

About this time the schedule was completed at last, the duties finally paid and declarations sworn, and the estate handed over to my own control. And looking over the account, I was really distressed to see how small were the charges made for transacting all my business, hardly enough, it seemed, to pay for the wine we had drunk at Mr. Paterson's table. Discovering how little there was to discharge for all the trouble the firm had taken on my behalf, I felt more than ever ashamed at the horrid suspicions of earlier days, the very thought of which made my cheeks tingle, more especially when I recalled the unworthy expectations of later ones, that these disinterested exertions in the matter of the election and everything else would be accounted for in the bill. The bill paid, there was still a heavy load of obligation remaining, of genuine hearty kindness, which it would be difficult ever to repay.

"And now," said my kind old friend, as we were talking over the business in his room in Gracechurch Street, "you see pretty clearly how matters stand. Arranging, as we have done, to distribute your election expenses over three years, and giving you a couple more to clear off the succession duties, you leave your capital untouched, and still have close upon two thousand five hundred a-year to start with. You won't find it a penny too much for a man in Parliament, especially if you are going to be liberal in your subscriptions and so forth, down at Leatherby; but, depend on it, you will find it every bit as easy to live on that sum as on twice the amount. Everything depends on the scale

you start upon. We are all creatures of habit. So, if I may presume to offer advice on the matter, I would say, begin quietly. There is no call to do much for the first year or two, and it will be easy enough to expand as occasion requires."

It was in furtherance of sound advice of the same kind previously administered, with which my experience of English life so far acquired entirely agreed, for I had already discovered it was very easy to spend money, that the modest house by Queen's Gate had been selected, and our household was now organised on a scale to match. Frederic, Mr. Paterson's servant, got us a man like himself, and a cook and undermaid were procured through Mrs. Herries's agency, who, with Annette, completed the establishment. I bought a brougham and a light phaeton for Eva, for which, following universal custom, we jobbed the horses, together with a corpulent coachman, accustomed evidently to late hours and beer; we jobbed also a couple of saddle-horses, good for park riding, but not for much else.

"Now, Eva," I said, on the eventful morning when Parliament was to assemble, "I have kept the purse hitherto, and all the accounts, Indian fashion, but I am going to be dreadfully busy now, so you must take the housekeeping off my hands. See, here is a little stock-in-trade for the fair accountant," and so saying I produced a little volume bound in russet, with gilt edges and a gilt lock and key, gilt lettered "Cash-Book" on the back.

"I will try, Charlie, but I am afraid I shall make an awful mess of it. I never could understand anything about accounts."

"I suppose you have never had much to do with them, so far, dear, but you will find it the easiest thing possible. You just put on this side

all the money you receive, and on the other all you spend, and the difference will be your balance in hand."

"I'll try, Charlie; but I never could do addition of money, and I am sure I shall never be able to add up those long pages properly."

"A little practice will make it quite easy, my child. It's a mere question of practice. Look at that dashing young lady in the counting-house at the Belgravia. I don't suppose she was particularly clever, but she could add you up a bill, or turn napoleons into sovereigns at the exchange of the day, like lightning. You have only to try, and with a little practice you will be astonished at your own powers in the arithmetical line."

"Oh, it's all very well to flatter, Charlie, but you don't know how stupid I am. I am sure I shall never be able to manage it." And Eva, as she said this, leaned over the table on which the book was lying, and looked quite downcast, and almost ready to cry.

"You know, Eva," I said, after a pause, "I don't want to bother you, but a moderate degree of care in money matters makes money go much further, and will add to the comfort of both of us. You can't want to go through life without a little trouble of this sort. All I want you to do is to make a beginning."

"It isn't the trouble I mind," said Eva; "but I am afraid of making blunders, and then you will be angry with me."

"Angry with you, my dear Eva! When have I ever been angry with you? How can you say such things?"

"No, not angry exactly; but you will look so grave if I don't manage that dreadful book properly, and then I shall get frightened, and then I shall be more stupid than ever."

"It is I who am stupid, to look

so solemn without meaning anything by it. But I don't want to make these accounts very tremendous at first. I will tell you how we will arrange matters. I must keep an account of some sort with the Leatherby bank, or old St. Leger will be in a huff, and Mrs. Gernell will never forgive us. I will make over their cheque-book to you. You shall draw cheques upon them for all your expenditure, and then at the end of the month I will make good what you have drawn from them from my London account, so as to keep a fixed balance with them. You shall be, in fact, a fixed imprest holder, as the accountants call it."

"I don't understand what that means," said Eva; "but I think I should be able to manage the cheques much better than keeping that dreadful book."

This arrangement was accordingly determined on, and I set off to take my seat in the House. But somehow this day, to which I had been looking forward so impatiently, yet brought with it a certain sense of disappointment. Already there was a tinge of alloy in the anticipated happiness, a bitter flavour left from the morning's talk. Could I be doing my duty by my little wife if she was thus so soon getting to be afraid of my looks and words? How, if a feeling of this sort had so soon arisen, when we had thus far been like lovers leading a honeymoon life, how would it be kept down amid the distractions and preoccupations of the profession I had now embarked upon? Some such uneasy reflections came unbidden into my mind as I walked down towards Westminster, but I was too much engrossed by the coming ceremony to pursue the reflection. We are fond of saying that we are the creatures of circumstance; but is it not oftener true

that we allow circumstances to master us, instead of shaping them to suit our purpose? We see more or less dimly in the course of life whither we are tending, and might, if we chose, keep clear of the rocks looming ahead; but vanity, pride, oftener still indolence and a sort of mental flabbiness, from which hardly any are free, act more powerfully than the whispered murmurings of conscience, and thus too often we are content to drift on till it is too late to avert the disaster.

Sergeant Lowder was waiting for me by appointment in Westminster Hall, having just come off a case in the Common Pleas, and under his shelter I made my first entry through the side-door sacred to members. It was worth being in Parliament, I observed, if only that you can hear the debates when you like, without being subjected to the indignities undergone by visitors to the galleries. Why should the servants of the people's representatives surpass in insolence all other creatures of the beadle and verger class? And I thought if ever I became better acquainted with the Speaker, I would take the liberty of putting that question to him.

In the library we found Mr. Sheepshanks, who had come up on one of his rare visits to town, and who, with the Sergeant, introduced me to the House. There were five or six members to be sworn in, and after that process, there being no room this day behind the Treasury bench, I took up my position on a back seat below the gangway on the same side, and set out from there to watch the men and manners of the place. On this first day there was little doing, although the House was very full. There was the usual address, but the speeches on it from the Opposition were brief and uninteresting: and we all got away in time for dinner. We partook of

that meal at the Lowders, who had found us out immediately on our coming to town. There was a rather large party, and as the Sergeant took Eva down I overheard him say, "So, Mrs. West, your husband has made his *début* in the House at last." "Yes," said Eva; "I am so glad. I wish I had been there. But did he make a nice speech?" After this I did not feel very keen about discussing my first day in Parliament with her after we returned home, but as it happened, Eva did not put any questions.

The popular notion about young and aspiring members is, that they enter the House ardent with zeal, burning to distinguish themselves, and sitting steadily through the debates in the hope of some chance opportunity of coming forward; or else that they work up for some great occasion when they may break out with a great oration; but that these zealots gradually cool down on making the surprising discovery that a mere indefinite aspiration after greatness is not a specific recipe for obtaining it, and eventually settle down into humdrum members of the ordinary kind, vastly different to the creations of their early fancies. However that may be, the process of disillusion ought certainly not to take long; and, as already remarked, I had seen sufficient, even during my few visits to the gallery of the House, to admit of forming a pretty clear conception of what the reality of membership would be, the dreary waste of time, the indescribable tedium of about three-fourths of the business that went on. Nor did it take long to discover that an ordinary member need be very little there; and in fact I used at first to attend only sufficiently often to vote when required for any important division, and to learn the ways of the House, which, after all, so far at least as regarded

their effect on other people, were very soon mastered. The thing which had most interest for me was the comparative success of different members; to analyse the reasons why some men, not particularly able or striking in their delivery, nevertheless always were listened to with attention, while others, although maybe voluble enough, were uniformly snubbed and suppressed. But the ways and manners of the House generally were an interesting study. The most noticeable thing, perhaps, was the sort of deprecating manner which members generally assumed, especially when walking through Westminster Hall or in the lobbies, between four and five o'clock, at which time the latter place usually contained a sprinkling of constituents seeking admission, or admiring the spectacle in the abstract. I do not say but that some members, who saw the obsequious policeman jostling visitors aside to make way for them, may have felt inward pride at a sense of their importance. There may perhaps have been such, possibly borough members for Liberal constituencies, but the general aspect of members was one of a deprecating character, as much as to say, Here we are, gentlemen, most unworthy misrepresentatives of you who are looking on. We feel that the difference in our positions is a most invidious one, and really if things were as they ought to be, you would be in our places and we in yours; but, in the mean time, pray excuse us, we are very humble. The attitude of the Ministerial members towards the rest of the House was even more apologetic, as if to say, It is really quite absurd that we should be in office and you gentlemen not; but pray don't suppose we take any credit to ourselves for it—a mere accident, a foolish trick of speaking has done it, or something insig-

nificant of that sort; pray excuse us, we are really very humble. This, however, was a mere lobby and library manner, so to speak. Inside the House the Treasury Bench could be fierce enough; persuasive indeed, and mildly reproachful towards their erring friends below the gangway, who were disposed to be always kicking over the Treasury traces, and, in fact, gave a great deal more trouble than the Opposition, but rolling out sarcasm and defiance against honourable gentlemen on the other side of the House.

Another thing that struck me at first very keenly was the want of reality about the party struggling that went on, or, to be more accurate, the artificial nature of the contest, for the strife was sometimes real enough in one sense. I could have understood that youngsters at a debating club might grow hot over argument, profoundly impressed with the truth and importance of their own views of things; that men just on the threshold of public life, should believe there was only one side to any question, and be unable to understand how anybody could think differently from themselves; how in such cases passion might be made to do duty for logic, and anger take the place of articulate utterance: but I confess to a feeling of surprise when I came to look on and see who the men were that carried on this Parliamentary warfare; that the leaders on both sides were quite old men, whose own political careers gave evidence in how many different ways the same opinions could be regarded by similar minds, not to say the same minds; men in the decline of life, who in all other affairs had probably grown tolerant and dispassionate, free from the passions and prejudices which pervert the judgment of younger people; men, in short,

whom one would be disposed to regard as raised above the level of ordinary strife, and who might survey in undisturbed serenity the strife of less experienced and more hot-blooded mortals. Of course I knew that it actually was not so; but then Merrifield and Braham and the rest had hitherto been mere abstractions, and it was not until I had taken my seat and noticed the sea of bald heads whenever members were uncovered, that I realized the incongruity of the proceedings. Indeed, the older the men the more fierce the language very often. The bitterest sarcasms upon the Government used to come from a man well on the wrong side of sixty, and the most violent and recriminative rejoinders from an equally venerable opponent. In fact, in politics men seemed always to remain young; and the seniors, who, it might be supposed, would have preferred sitting calmly to survey our conflicts from afar, like the blameless Ethiopians of Homer, were the very Ajax and Hector of the strife. This struck me the more coming from India, where old men—that is, old Englishmen—of any sort were rare, being either civilians passed over in promotion, and therefore withdrawn from the race of official competition, or generals and governors, personages to be treated with deference and respect.

The want of reality about Parliamentary warfare struck me the more visibly, because when I entered the House parties in their original sense had ceased to exist. In former days the two great divisions represented two specific sets of altogether diverse political opinions, and a man found no difficulty in deciding to which of the two he would belong. But now there was no longer any positive difference in principle between them. The one side had given up its original rôle of resisting all

change, the other its advocacy of constant change. Both parties now admitted that reform of any part of our institutions was advisable, if only a sufficient case could be made out for it; opinion merely differed as to what constituted a valid case. Further so many of the leaders had changed both their opinions and their sides at different times, even the two parties having once themselves changed places—the whilome constitutionalists on one memorable occasion setting the example of taking a header over a constitutional Niagara while their opponents in vain tried to swim against the torrent—and in fact all broad lines of demarcation had become blurred and almost obliterated. The opinions of the two parties were now for the most part shaped by the views of their leaders for the time being; and as it was usually quite an open question what view each of these two distinguished men would take upon any point that arose, party politics were reduced to a perfectly incoherent condition. All that could be predicted was, that whichever side got the start in any proposal, the other would probably oppose it; one party was just as likely as the other to assume at any moment the office of drag to the political coach. But it was plain that there needed only the rise of some great question of principle in order that the House should recast itself anew; the existing party distinctions covered no longer any real differences of opinion; while the majority of the members were so essentially agreed on main principles as to present the elements for a combined party with a commanding majority, so soon as the ties of personal predilections and dislikes which still retained men in nominal bondage should be shaken off. I give these first impressions now because, although they may be by no

means original, other persons having no doubt received them in their turn just in the same way, it appeared to me that first impressions were the most accurate; for that after a certain time men in the House got to settle down into a conventional way of looking at all political matters, till at last the formalities of party government became in their eyes something inherent in the natural condition of things.

Another phenomenon which surprised me a good deal at first was the number of members who seemed to have no business in Parliament. I don't mean the young swells who entered for the fun of the thing, or as something to be done as a matter of course, just like coming of age, and who seldom showed except at four o'clock, when questions were asked, or perhaps looked in for half an hour with their white ties and button-hole geraniums after dinner; nor the older county members, who, if they seldom spoke, added weight to the House, and formed a very imposing audience; nor the lawyers whose main attention was given to their professional practice, and who looked at politics merely as a means to an end. There were a lot of men who seemed to fulfil no useful functions either in or out of the House; who knew nobody, not even each other; who seldom spoke at all and never to the point; middle-aged men for the most part with a very questionable command of the letter *h*, who sat about in obscure parts of the House, and apparently derived from that proceeding their only gratification.

It would be a trite thing to remark that if there were not many good speakers, the House collectively made a very formidable audience, but the impression was so striking at first that it is worth recording. One felt that whatever might be the mental calibre of each particular

individual, there was sure to be some one in the assembly who would detect a fallacy, some one against whose taste any fault of manner or impropriety of thought would offend. But what struck me still more forcibly, more even than the ease and readiness of the best speakers, was the tolerance of the House for bores. Certain men, indeed, for flippancy without wit, or something or other offensive in their manner, were put down without mercy; but for wearisome talking if otherwise inoffensive there appeared an infinite sufferance, although it must be added the House would often he made up of bores only, waiting for their own innings, and exercising patience on the give-and-take principle. What conceivable object these gentlemen proposed to themselves it would be difficult to understand. They had never anything original to say, nor anything original in the manner of saying it; they did not advance the cause of humanity or legislation by speaking, nor even their own, for their utterances seldom got more than a line or two of space in the newspapers, and were very often left out altogether, and what they said, or thought, or did, had not the smallest apparent influence on anybody or anything; yet night after night would these gentlemen be in their places, springing up in coveys whenever the platform was vacant to catch the Speaker's eye, time after time, till at last by the process of elimination every one of the party had had his say, and the debate could be closed. Night after night this used to go on, and the same well-known names to appear in next morning's paper with a brief abstract tagged on to each. But different orders of beings find happiness in different ways; the jackdaw, perhaps, takes quite as much pleasure in its croaking as the nightingale in its song.

CHAPTER XXII.—A FIRST PLUNGE.

However, I give these impressions because they only lasted for a time. After a very few days the strangeness of the life passed off; men no longer noticed the new member in the library or other haunts of the house; and I came and went like the rest. And then arose impatience to enter on the real business which brought me there. The point was how to set about it, for I was too keenly alive to the faults of others not to be anxious to avoid becoming a bore myself. There was of course the regular recipe of a big first speech for a new member is always listened to; but then a big speech might prove flat, and it would be awkward to start again with the incubus of a first failure. A better course appeared to be to warm gradually into work, beginning by casual remarks in committee, and so proceeding onwards to higher flights with practice, as the first shyness wore off, taking care, above all, never to say anything unless there were something to say. But my first attempt was not a very happy one. The Paymaster-General to the Forces, who had just been caught and was quite new to military business, having stated that the artillery was divided into horse and foot artillery, I rose to explain that there were three kinds of artillery recognised in her Majesty's service—namely, horse, field, and garrison artillery; whereupon that official replied that this was just what he meant—there was the artillery with horses for duty in the field, and there was the artillery for garrison duty, which he had for convenience' sake styled the foot-artillery; but he was obliged to the honourable and gallant member for setting him right as to the more exact terminology, whereon

there was a slight titter. And next Saturday the *Overseer*, a weekly paper much given to epigram and omniscience, devoted one of the smart little paragraphs that made up its first two or three pages to this incident. "The colonels are being reinforced by the captains. The last recruit to this obstructive brigade is a Captain West of the artillery, who succeeded Lord Stowe at Leatherby (borough with of course a purely agricultural constituency), a young officer evidently endowed with a fine capacity for small regimental details, as evidenced by his flippant comment on the Paymaster-General's statement last Friday sennight. When will these military gentry understand that the country does not care a fig whether a thing is called a battery or a brigade, but wants men with a definite policy on military organisation; above all, wants brains? Cannot they understand, too, that it is because we cannot find knowledge conjoined with ideas that the country prefers a civilian administration of the army—prefers even the vague generalities of the Paymaster-General to the small exactness of military men, who seem unable to look beyond their own parade ground?" This was a bad beginning, and matters did not improve when, a day or two later, on Mr. Thorowcome observing that the inspector-general of recruiting considered it a very healthy sign that the artillery were only about 1500 below their proper strength, the demon of impatience possessed me to get up and say that as a matter of fact the regiment was just 1850 short of the required recruits, and that this fact appeared in my poor judgment to indicate a very unsatisfactory state of things. Whereupon Mr. Thorowcome blandly retorted

that no doubt the honourable and gallant member (from whose valuable aid in these discussions he hoped the House would derive much future benefit) thought with others of his cloth that there was nothing like leather. Well, the honourable and gallant member's statement about the strength of the artillery might very possibly be correct, although he had no reason to doubt that the return which he held in his hand was quite exact as to the facts; but the real thing to look to was the general condition of recruiting in the British army generally, and he was able to announce that whereas six years before, when the right honourable gentleman on the opposite bench had charge of the department [this was a hit at old Perkyman], the establishment was 5.27 per cent short of its proper strength, it was now only 4.63 per cent short, and for his part he (Mr. Thorowcome) considered that this was a far from unsatisfactory result to have brought about in six years. Further, he would take the opportunity of reminding the House that whereas at the period in question the army fourth-class reserve numbered only 835 men, it now amounted to 978 men.

This was a bad beginning. At the Union Jack, indeed, my *début* was rather favourably regarded. The *Overseer* was not much read at that institution, and my attacks, as my friends there were pleased to call them, both on the Paymaster-General and the War Minister were considered to be very much to the point. "You're quite right, West, my boy," said Cobbe Smith; "the state of the regiment is perfectly disgraceful. Would you believe it? in my battery we are eleven men and a trumpeter short of our proper complement; and as for horses, why, if we were to go on a campaign tomorrow, we should have to leave a couple of guns behind. I declare to

you I have been in the regiment more than twenty years, and I never saw anything like it." And Cobbe Smith was so oppressed with a sense of his inability to proceed on a campaign the next morning with all the guns of his battery, that he sat back on the ottoman in moody silence, with his hands thrust into his trousers-pockets.

"Then look at the promotion," broke in Straight. "Just look at me, six-and-twenty years in the service, and no more chance of getting the command of a horse brigade than West here."

"But what can you expect with a parcel of civilians to manage things? Why, if you were to show old Thorowcome a gun, I'll bet he wouldn't know the breech from the muzzle."

"Well, I hope West will show them up properly, with their blunders and ignorance," added Straight; "I know I would if I were in Parliament, but I shall never have that luck."

Notwithstanding the moral support afforded by the approbation of Cobbe Smith and Straight, I felt that it would never do to remain in this false position, and determined to make a vigorous effort for escape. The opportunity arrived almost sooner than I expected, for on old Nixon's motion that the strength of the army should be reduced by ten thousand men, there was at one point of the debate a sort of slackness in the rising of members to occupy the vacancy: in a sudden access of audacity I got up, and heard my name called by the Speaker. There was no help for it now, and accordingly I made my plunge. I had made the discovery on the previous occasion when offering my unfortunate remarks, that it is not necessary for being heard to shout at the top of your voice, and so fortunately managed to get off at once in the right sort of pitch, with-

out bawling or speaking so low as to be indistinct. I had my speech ready, a disquisition on general military principles, which it was easy by the interpolation of a few sentences to adapt to the point at issue—a practice, I afterwards found, which was not uncommon among honourable members, so that you give your speech all the appearance of an impromptu utterance. Yet this indeed it virtually was on the present occasion; for although I could have repeated my speech by heart, as thought over in many a walk between Westminster and Queen's Gate, somehow when once I warmed into the subject, new ways of putting my ideas rose in my mind, and I found myself going off the track I had laid out. This sort of inspiration which possesses some people when acting under the influence of an audience is quite inexplicable and incapable of being analysed, but it is, I suppose, what all men experience who have the gift of ready speaking. To have recited an impromptu speech in a room by myself would have been utterly impossible. I could not have got out half-a-dozen consecutive sentences without writing them down or stopping to think. But once on my legs in the House, and charged with specific ideas, there appeared no sort of difficulty in expressing them. The difficulty was indeed to know when to stop; and although I seemed to be on my legs for only about ten minutes, I found by the clock that the speech had lasted for more than forty.

There could be no doubt of the success of this first effort, even if some of the morning papers had not devoted a special article to it next morning. When the House becomes so silent that nothing is to be heard but your own voice; when members cease to go out, and the place gradually gets fuller as the speech goes

on, and when, without being able to recognise any one in particular, you become sensible of a sea of faces all turned towards you, it does not need the "hear, hear," which breaks in at intervals and follows at the end, to tell you that the effort has been effective. The Treasury Bench did not cheer, perhaps because members did not wish to commit themselves to specific approval of some of my ideas; but there was no opposition on either side, for I had endeavoured to place the matter above a party footing, and several acquaintances from both sides offered their congratulations afterwards. My object was partly, of course, to let people know that there was one soldier at any rate who did not think that there was nothing like leather; and when I said that the honourable proposer of the amendment appeared to have a good deal of reason on his side when he urged that the army should be reduced by ten thousand men, for that the existing establishment had been arrived at upon no definite principle, and was neither one thing nor the other—too large for peace, too small for war—the gentlemen below the gangway gave plenty of applause, which, however, died away when I went on to say that there was no reason why the particular strength he proposed should be more suitable in the nature of things than that proposed by the Government; and that, as the burden of proof lay with those who wanted change, it would be proper to support the establishment fixed by the Government till some other specific distribution should be shown to be more suitable; then the approbation ceased in this part of the House, but was taken up on the other side. But the point of what I advanced was in the development of the argument that this mode of dealing with the army

was as politically unscientific and unsafe as it was opposed to all sound economy. The time has surely arrived, I submitted, for recognising the fact that a standing army is no longer dangerous to the liberties of the country. At any rate, if danger were to arise from that quarter, it would not be from the power given to the Crown or the Government, but from an entirely different and opposite condition of things. It was surely time to recognise the fact that the old military polity of nations arming for war had passed away, and become replaced by a new state of society, under which all Europe stood ready armed. The gradual change from a peace to a war footing, which occurred in former times, was no longer met with. The change was instantaneous; and therefore for England alone to rely on the old system, keeping up a force in peace time which was neither one thing nor the other, trusting to meeting the difficulty somehow or another, was as complete an anachronism, to say nothing of the waste and extravagance involved, as if resort were had to the practice of the middle ages, when the king called on the barons to summon their men-at-arms, and to come and invade France. It is not the case that the military liabilities of the country vary from year to year. The only variation that takes place is in the feelings of the nation, alternating between false assurance and unreasoning fear, or according to the greater or smaller attention given to Continental politics, as evidenced by the whimsical additions to and reductions of the army; but the liability remains in fact a constant quantity, being properly measured, not by our false fears or false confidence, but by the military power of other nations, which, if it alters at all, alters only to increase. What

we had to do, then, was first to obtain a clear view of our liabilities, which surely it might be possible to arrive at, and then to frame our military organisation accordingly. Our insular position would, no doubt, admit of our doing this on a smaller and cheaper scale than was practicable for other nations; but if our dangers were less, our responsibilities were not; and until the national voice distinctly repudiated that responsibility, and pronounced that England's future policy should be limited to the defence of our own shores from invasion, this playing fast and loose with the army was a childish policy, equally unworthy of a great nation, or a government responsible for the exercise of foresight. Not the least fault of such a policy was its wastefulness, for war as for peace. For war, because if one fact was plainly demonstrated by recent history, it was that war could only be waged cheaply, if waged quickly; but it was plain to any one who thought about it, that our present system would oblige us, in case of war, to drift into a repetition of the fatuous mode of pursuing it which we followed at the beginning of the century, when Ministers came down to the House to propose a vote of forty thousand men as a sort of number which would furnish a good lot of fighting, and keep a few stray expeditions agoing till the next meeting of Parliament; and when people looked on a war as a sort of chronic outlet for the constitution, like a seton in a scrofulous patient, which might be kept going for an indefinite time, or at any rate till the Government went out—money and blood enough being frittered away in the long-run to have settled the matter in a single campaign if properly expended. The system was equally wasteful in peace, because economy in the establishments and more costly portions of the army

was impossible, so long as the total strength of the forces were liable to these whimsical fluctuations. It did not then in the least follow that the adoption of a more definite military policy would lead to greater cost. On the contrary, the presumption was wholly the other way. Who could practise economy in his own household if he never kept up the same number of servants for a week together? Just so with regard to the army. Fixity of system should be the direct precursor of economy, because until you know distinctly what you want, you will never find out what you don't want. Put your establishment on a permanent basis, and you will be able to lop off the excrescences, of which

be sure there are plenty. You would most probably find, for one thing, that the number of men on actual service might be sensibly reduced. There is no more reason why the strength of the army and its cost should be liable to fluctuation than that of any other branch of the public service. Put an end, then, to this fatuous policy of annual votes and fluctuating estimates. Let the military establishment of the country be fixed permanently by Act of Parliament, in pursuance of a definite policy, to be deliberately considered; and when so fixed, let it be maintained intact till a new state of things arises, or until a distinctly new policy is recognised and adopted by the nation.

CHAPTER XXIII.—COMING TO THE SURFACE.

It was sufficient proof of the impression made by this speech, that not only did Mr. Braham, later in the evening, refer to it in complimentary terms, congratulating the House, as he put it, on the accession to their discussions of the honourable and gallant and ingenuous young member; but Mr. Merrifield himself replied to it at some length, and was indeed somewhat vehement and very discursive. War was a detestable thing, and it was to be hoped the nations of the world would come to see its iniquity in course of time. Meanwhile our insular position gave us an immunity from the dangers of war which other nations did not possess, and therefore the analogy from the condition of Continental powers did not apply to ourselves. At the same time, it might be freely admitted that no Government would deserve the confidence of the House or the country which was not prepared to maintain the national honour, and to carry out any engagements which the

sense of the country should declare ought to be fulfilled, but which it would be quite time to provide for when each particular case arose. Finally, he hoped the House would accept these assurances, and not be led away by specious appeals to the imagination, or temptations to indulge in the luxury of passion. All which, pronounced in a splendid, clear, ringing voice, with a good deal of emphasis, a copious flow of words, and an abundance of illustration and amplification, sounded highly impressive; but yet it was not quite plain what it all meant—whether the great speaker intended to imply that we ought to be satisfied with trusting in Providence, or that we could afford to be independent of that aid. In fact it was the inconclusiveness of the speech which brought up Mr. Braham, who was quite in his best style of sarcasm and repartee while pointing out what he termed the political effeminacy and flabbiness of his right honourable opponent, although at the same time leaving

it quite an open question which way his own opinions tended.

These two speeches would have been sufficient evidence of success, even if various members had not come up afterwards to offer congratulations, while two or three of the daily papers next morning had articles on the debate, with complimentary notices of my share in it. The *Overseer*, too, came out on the following Saturday with a patronising little paragraph: "We have done Captain West an injustice. He is no mere swash-buckler after all. His speech on Thursday was marked by a catholicity of view as wide as it was unusual. The colonels having failed us, what if the captains can help us? It seems just possible that this young member may turn out to be the man the country is in want of—a man, that is, with brains and a policy, and with technical knowledge enough to keep him clear of the small blunders civilian army reformers are apt to commit, and which the colonels, with their proficiency in trumpery details, are always on the watch to detect."

Congratulations also came in from other quarters. At the next board meeting of the Agricultural and Commercial Assurance Company, our chairman, who was in the wholesale oil trade and always carried a moral supply of that commodity about with him for general application, took occasion to make quite a little speech about the honour which he was sure the board must all feel had been conferred on their body by the distinguished appearance lately made by one—by the latest, but not the least, accession to their number, in another place. And in the bank parlour of the Metropolitan and Provincial I was conscious of taking up quite a new position, feeling indeed that it would have been quite possible without appearing presumptuous to

question the imprimatur of our secretary upon the character of the discounts effected by him during the week. Such is the magic power, the overvalued power, of being able to speak without stammering. Perhaps, however, the most flattering testimony to the effect of my maiden effort was the sort of little flutter of which I became sensible when, a day or two afterwards, I entered the reading-room of the Union Jack, as those who knew my name whispered it to those who did not, and men looked up from their newspapers as I passed to my seat. Here, in truth, was fame—on a very small scale; for the Union Jack, although taking high ground for a purely service club on the score of fashion and exclusiveness, was not equally conspicuous in an intellectual or political sense.

Yet it was not all praise, for some of my old friends appeared scarcely to approve of my proceeding; Peake of the Engineers, for example, whom I met on the club steps as I was coming away. "Holloa, West!" said he, "how d'ye do?" and then, after a pause, during which he looked at me with a sort of protesting smile, "so you have been making a regular speech?" much in the same way as one might say, "so have you got a new hat?" implying that it was open to him or anybody else who choose to do the same, albeit it would show questionable taste to do it. He said no more, and after a further smiling pause, passed in; but I could without difficulty interpret his brief address to imply that he considered I had done a distinct injury to himself, a man nearly ten years my senior in the army, by thus going out of the professional groove in which he was accustomed to move. Peake's view was taken by divers others of my acquaintance, who were evidently

put out that one of their number should do anything different from what they had ever done themselves; but for the most part these critics conveyed their reproof by withholding all allusion to the subject, discussing the weather, or the Derby, or anything but what they knew would be interesting to the person they addressed. Straight's criticism was also somewhat qualified. "I see you have gone into the speaking line already," said he. "That's not much in my way," he added, and he might with great truth have added that he was not accustomed to edit Greek plays or to write leading articles for a morning paper. My gallant friend Pyghed, commanding the 110th, was considerably more hearty. "I congratulate you," said he, shaking hands in the street; "that's right, my boy, pitch into them, give it them well. I should like to see you in old Merrifield's place, that I should. Anyhow, give it them all round. A parcel of ignorant beggars; much they know about the army. Done enough mischief already, they have." Who they were whom my gallant friend thus apostrophised he did not explain, but he evidently regarded the interference of Parliament in army affairs at all as a thing only just tolerable and to be endured.

There was one disappointment in store. I did not get away on the night of the speech until very late, or rather early; and notwithstanding Lord Palmerston's prescription of a walk home, it needed the anodyne of one or more cigars and the best part of a stupid novel to subdue the excitement of debate, and in fact I sat up reading by the fire till Eva came home from a ball, her first ball without me, and to which she had gone with the Stricklands. Conversation turned

on this for some time, till suddenly Eva bethought her that I had come home very late too, whereon I mentioned that there had been a long debate, distinguished by my first speech.

"Oh, fancy," said Eva; "that is nice. How I wish I had been there, instead of at this stupid ball which has made me so dreadfully tired! But where is the account of it? I must read it before I go to bed."

I explained that the debates of the night would not appear till in the morning's paper, which after all was usually held to be pretty quick work.

"Of course," said Eva; "how stupid I am to forget that! but really I am too tired to think. However we shall see it in the morning."

And next morning the speech was reported with very fair accuracy, and I confess to reading it through myself before Eva came down; and although she was very late, and I wanted to be off to keep an engagement, I waited on in order to hear what she thought about it. But although I put the paper on the table close by her plate, she had forgotten all about it, and I felt too proud and too much hurt to remind her. I did not see Eva again till the evening, when we had a dinner-party, and Mrs. Strickland, who was among the guests, began to congratulate me with effusion on my success. Such a congratulation was a success in itself, for Mrs. Strickland, who was the wife of our county member, the gentleman whose defection to the Liberal party had caused such a sensation in Yewcestershire, was a great politician as well as a leader of fashion, having all the zeal of a convert. We had made the acquaintance of the family during our winter at Leatherby, Stampton Court being only about seven miles from that town, when both Mrs. Strickland

and the young ladies straightway fell in love with Eva, and a week spent at Stampton had been among the pleasant episodes of the winter, Mr. Strickland's fox-hounds hunting the country adjacent to that covered by the Leatherby subscription pack. Mrs. Strickland, while enunciating boldly at second-hand her husband's Liberal principles, was evidently uneasy at the county schism his change of politics had occasioned; but what appeared to me to weigh most upon her mind during the time of our visit, was the rumour, or rather the general belief throughout North Yewcestershire regions, that her husband should be coquetting with Mr. Merrifield about a peerage. Mr. Strickland forsooth, Mr. Strickland the great commoner, whose ancestors had represented the county ever since the times of the Tudors—whose grandfather had been offered an earldom by Pitt, and whose father might have got a peerage any day on hinting that he wanted it; Mr. Strickland of Stampton Court, to be asking Mr. Merrifield, and asking as a favour for a miserable barony! Well might this malignant libel, although plainly a mere factious device of the enemy, weigh on the spirits of a lady who, although polite and suave to gushing, had nevertheless a fair share of latent pride. Another care there was which up to this time had not been hinted at, and this political grievance was lost sight of in the London world, where Mrs. Strickland was simply a lady of fashion with a desire to cover her husband's flank movement by a show of intellectual liberalism; and in this view to convert their family mansion in Mulgrave Square into a sort of modern Holland House; and I think the lady was really pleased at the success of the young member who had been taken into their circle on trust. "I want to have a long

talk with you about these army matters, Captain West, some day when you can find time. Your speech has set us all thinking about it. I don't altogether agree with what you say, you know; for Mr. Strickland is quite a Radical on these points, and is full of the Swiss system; and of course we women are apt to take opinions from those about us; and then Tom—Tom was Mrs. Strickland's only son, and a captain in the Guards—is quite the other way of thinking, and has great arguments with his father; but what you say about the development of nations is really so very striking, that altogether I think you have made a convert of me. That was the part of your speech which impressed me most. It seems so very true when put in that way; don't you think so, Mrs. West? But how pleased you must have been this morning!"

All this was delicate flattery, while Eva looked so confused that I was glad to occupy Mrs. Strickland's attention until she recovered herself.

After our guests had departed, Eva remained standing thoughtfully by the fire. At last she said, coming up and putting her hands on my shoulder in her usual coaxing way, "Oh, Charlie, I am so sorry."

A few playful words would have put all right. Instead of these, I answered, "What is there to be sorry about? Your party appeared to have gone off very well."

"Oh no, it is not that. You know what I mean quite well. I am so sorry about the speech."

"My dear," I replied, like a detestable young prig as I was, "there is nothing to be sorry about; I can't help these things, I will try and do better another time."

"Oh, Charlie, don't talk like that, please. That shows me how angry you are. And I am sure I deserve it. But you know I always was a

stupid little thing, wasn't I? We can't make ourselves different from what we are, can we?"

"My dear, it is not for me to pay you compliments, but it is not a question of your abilities as it seems to me. It is rather my poor ability that has very properly come under your unconscious criticism."

"Ah! I see that you are still angry from the bitter way in which you speak. And I know I deserve it; but indeed I fully meant to read your speech and all about it, but you don't know how dreadfully tired I was after the ball, and somehow—but where is the paper, Charlie? I should like to read it before I go to bed; only, you know, you must not expect me to understand all about it, and say clever things like Mrs. Strickland does."

The paper, I replied, had last been seen in the immediate neighbourhood of the breakfast urn, and, not having legs, would probably be still in the dining-room. And Eva, giving me one of her sweetest kisses,

went down to fetch it, and returning sat down in an easy-chair to read the debate, while I took up a book.

But very shortly her little head began to nod, and in ten minutes she was fast asleep, while the newspaper slipped to the ground.

I stepped across to pick it up, but the rustling of the paper awoke her. She put out her hand, looking conscious and perplexed, to take it again, but something in my look stopped her.

A little caress, or even a little banter, might have put matters right, and sent my wife to bed with her mind at rest again. But I suppose I looked, like a blockhead that I was, angry or scornful, for Eva was confused and ashamed, and stammering something about being sorry, turned slowly away, and, taking up her candlestick, left the room.

And I suffered her to go off without speaking, but I felt nevertheless that what had happened was even worse than a quarrel.

CHAPTER XXIV.—A SENSATION HEADER.

My first success as a speaker did not lead me to commit the mistake of troubling the House too often. Above all things one has to avoid in the House being looked upon as a bore; and having observed how one or two men had marred a successful *début* by not knowing when to stop, I forbore from taking a part in even criticising the Estimates, although they were inviting enough to provoke comment, especially when one saw how wide of the mark were most of the attacks made on them in Committee. But, in fact, the Estimates in their present form merely represented the results of our haphazard organisation, which had to be improved by going to the root of things, and not merely by

nibbling at stray items, as some ardent young Radicals with more zeal than knowledge seemed to think was the proper way of setting to work. However, I was anxious to have the opportunity of saying something that should fall outside the regular groove of military subjects, to remove the popular notion that a soldier must not only, above every other class, think that there is nothing like leather, but that he cannot look beyond professional details. It was already quite plain, indeed, that a military man is at a decided disadvantage in coming to the front in military matters; the special knowledge, which would make the political fortune of any young civilian, is taken in his case as a matter

of course, and gives him no credit; but far more than this, military rank, unless it be very high rank, acts as a positive disqualification. To the aspiring civilian all things are both possible and easy, if he only has brains and does not stammer; but the soldier, if only a captain as I was, has to work his way up against a strong pressure of prejudice, especially among the members of his own profession.

However, the debate in May on our Canadian policy gave me the desired opportunity of breaking ground in a new line. This time I did not carry every one with me, for people were not prepared to accept at once so novel an idea, which besides jarred against the feelings of many, and was opposed to the first impulse of all; but at any rate I had an attentive hearing, and by anticipating a good many of the stock arguments that were sure to be employed in reply, the force of the speeches that followed was somewhat weakened. Canada might perhaps be regarded as an open question, although even then the honourable gentleman who talked so glibly about maintaining the security of the Dominion, had probably but the vaguest idea of the consequences involved in acting upon that principle, should we ever be required to do so; of the enormity of the effort that would be involved, the almost certainty of eventual failure. But, as regards British Columbia, there could be but one conclusion with every rational mind that chose to think out the problem. We might avoid the question, like the ostrich hiding its head in the sand, but the danger was not the less there because we shunned it. People were apt to think that a thing could not happen because they found it difficult to realise the idea, and it was difficult to realise the idea of things which had not happened.

Yet, as a matter of fact, we had lost colonies before, and a very bitter draught it was to swallow; and although some people, from confusion of thought, seemed to fancy that the prosperity which arose out of the sudden development of our manufacturing power and the conquest of India was due to the loss of the American colonies which happened simultaneously, there could be no reasonable doubt that the loss of this great portion of the empire was not only felt to be, but was actually, a tremendous blow and calamity. It was indeed difficult to realise what might have been the greatness and prosperity of the British Empire if this separation had never taken place, or if it had occurred under happier conditions and at a later time; but it is not so difficult to conceive the advantage England would have possessed in the great revolutionary struggle, and the different character that would have been imposed on that war, if she had presented the attitude of a united kingdom on both sides of the Atlantic.

It may be said, indeed, that the separation of the American colonies was indirectly advantageous, for that the identity of England and its character as the centre of the empire could not have been preserved with this enormous addition on the other side of the Atlantic. This argument was certainly not applicable to our connection with British Columbia; but if such a development of the empire as would have arisen from the maintenance of America as an integral part of it, might have brought its special disadvantages, on the other hand the corresponding advantages would be wholly lost in the case of an outlying territory on the Pacific, which could never be a source of strength, but would always be a burden and responsibility.

There was this further difference between the two cases, that America might have been retained by proper management in the first instance, whereas Columbia could not be by any means whatever, if the Americans chose to set about taking it in earnest. But the difference is more apparent than real. The same cause acts under another form. Then, it was bad generalship and blindness to the nature of the task involved which brought about the disaster; now, it would be bad policy and blindness to the political consequences of it.

Then consider the costliness and the strain on the national life of such a struggle at the present time. It would no longer be a matter of sending forth paltry expeditions to New Orleans, or a trumpery fight about some little West India island, carried on at a distance without disturbing the current of European life and commerce; the struggle would be on as much a greater scale than anything undertaken before, as the last war between France and Germany exceeded the efforts called forth in the days of Louis XIV. There could be no rational doubt on this point. However inadequate the scale on which a war of this sort might be begun, the effort would rise as the magnitude of the task became more clearly apparent to the national mind; the contest would go on increasing and intensifying with the rising passions of the two great peoples engaged, and a proud nation such as ours would only desist when at last the bitter truth became apparent, that no effort and no sacrifice could be sufficient to procure success. And this conviction would not be forced on the national mind until we had arrived at the point of national exhaustion. It would be the story of the Athenians and Syracuse over again; the downfall of a State

brought about by wasting its resources in striving against hope to accomplish the impossible. And all because we would not take warning in time.

Then think of the divisions of public feeling that would arise at home while such a struggle went on, between the men who foresee from the first that the task is hopeless, and those who are for struggling onwards, first from over-confidence, then from pride, lastly from despair. Think too of the political differences that must be created between different classes as the struggle went on, the breaches growing ever wider as the political structure grows weaker; the increase of pauperism keeping pace with, and acting like fuel to the flame of political faction, stimulated too by increasing taxation and decaying commerce. Could the constitution bear this accumulated strain? And for what is the load to be imposed? For some great principle in defence of which a nation equally with an individual may worthily sacrifice its existence? Not a bit. We undergo this certain risk, and retain our prosperity on sufferance, simply and solely because we are too mentally indolent to look our responsibilities in the face, and too deficient in imagination to realise distinctly what will nevertheless be the inevitable result of certain assumed events; too careless to be at the trouble of perceiving, and acting on the perception, that the western world has entered on an entirely new political condition, with which our present colonial system is quite inconsistent.

Of course I shall be charged with offering pusillanimous counsel, and it will be said too that I am exposing our weakness to possible antagonists. But foolhardiness is not courage, and this is not even a case of the former quality. We are no more showing bravery by our

present attitude of heedlessness, than the travellers who sit careless in the train, unconscious of the broken bridge ahead. We take the matter so coolly only because the people trust in their rulers, and their rulers look no further forward than themselves. As for divulging secrets, is any one so foolish as to suppose that the Americans do not perfectly appreciate already the vantage-ground they possess under present conditions in any war between the two countries, the absolute certainty of what will happen on the shores of the Pacific, and the calmness, therefore, with which they can await any issue, whether of war or peace? Theirs is the silence of confidence. They know that we stand now just in the same case as would be any foreign nation with regard to us, which had Cornwall or Anglesea in temporary occupation: they hold a mortgage over us which they can foreclose when they please.

True patriotism does not consist in putting dangers out of sight, which are hid only from those who are too blind to see them. The patriotism would divert disaster by timely precaution. I speak because I love my country too well to wish her to be overweighted in any contest, and because the danger of war is diminished just in proportion as the temptation is withdrawn from other powers to strike us a blow.

Such is an outline of what I said, and that it was effective might be inferred from my again being honoured by a reply from the Prime Minister himself, although, no doubt, the compliment would have been still greater if he had not been rather in the habit of replying to everybody all round the House on every possible occasion. I confess that, while listening to his speech, the sonorous voice and vigorous de-

clamation with which it was delivered, the ease and fluency of the great speaker, now solemn, now sarcastic, occasionally even humorous, although there was not much of that quality; while it was to a certain extent gratifying to have all this fire, and vigour, and stream of words poured on me, I felt nevertheless somewhat small and uncomfortable. I was very sensible, especially, of the differences between the utterances of the practised debater and the crudeness in delivery of this my second effort, the more so perhaps that the audience would not give me credit for having myself been fully conscious of sundry defects in manner and method, but would be sure to fancy me better pleased with myself than I really was. There was further the contrast in length between the two speeches; for I admit I could not have said what I had to say in so many words, even if I had tried. Yet, although overborne, as it were, by the power and copiousness of the reply, I must admit that, what between parentheses, and digressions, and limitations, and qualifications, I could not be certain whether the great orator was not, after all, very much of my way of thinking; at any rate, whether his words would not admit of this construction at some future time. This was, indeed, the view taken of the debate by the *Piccadilly* next day; while Mr. Braham, later in the evening, was exceedingly sarcastic and vicious about the ambiguity of the right honourable gentleman's utterances, although carefully abstaining from pronouncing any decided opinion himself on the matter.

The papers also drew attention to the speech, perhaps more for something of earnestness in the manner of uttering it, which made an impression within the House that spread out of doors, than on account of its

intrinsic merits. The *Dial* observed that it only reflected the general feeling and common-sense of the nation while declaring that the country would never repudiate its duties, nor measure the extent of its liabilities by the difficulties of fulfilling them. The natural instinct of the country would dictate but one reply to such a proposal—namely, that the dignity of the colonial empire should be maintained intact; and if ever a difficulty should arise such as has been referred to, then no doubt circumstances would indicate the proper mode of action, compatible with a due regard to prudence, as well as to the honour and commercial interests of the country; but the general good sense of the people and of Parliament would probably be opposed to framing anticipations regarding a difficulty which, after all, might never occur. The *Unicorn* boldly said that it was pusillanimous and traitorous to suggest to another nation the means of striking the blow which we desired to avert, putting this forward as an original and unanswerable argument. The *Unicorn* also gave a long article on the subject, besides three spasmodic paragraphs in its opening pages, partly political and partly prophetic—with a dash of metaphysics, including an analysis of the mental attributes of younger members of Parliament, to the ingenuity of which I could not attempt to do justice by a mere abstract.

The sensation which thus seemed to have been produced in other quarters, was equally to be observed on entering the Union Jack, amid the congratulations received there. Some of my good friends, indeed, whose politics were rather pronounced than distinct, hardly knew what to make of the manifesto. Thus when a bystander in the smoking-room asked Colonel Pyghed if he had seen the *Overseer*, that gallant officer replied

that he should rather think he had not, nor the *Daily Eclectic* either; he knew better than to read either one or the other; the paper he went by was the *Unicorn*. Everybody knew that Merrifield wrote all the articles in the *Eclectic*. "I suppose he earns a few halfpence by it," added my gallant friend, "and I'm sure I don't grudge it him, poor beggar, for there's no doubt he is as poor as a church mouse; literally hasn't got one sixpence to rub against another." From which any one who had been accustomed to read the cynical utterances of the *Eclectic* regarding that brilliant statesman, and the half-hearted support it gave to him, might at once accept Colonel Pyghed's assertion that he had not read the articles which he assigned to Mr. Merrifield's pen. All which is an illustration of the impossibility of getting read nowadays. Republican organs denounce a bloated aristocracy and effete monarchy, and supporters of those institutions are scornfully sarcastic about demagogism, but each party nourishes its principles on its own diet; aristocrats do not wax fat on the effusions of the Hole-in-the Wall, and it is only an occasional kid-glove disciple of the Marat or Robespierre school who hears what is said about him and his friends in more refined circles.

Perhaps the best indication of the effect of my effort on the public mind was the approbation accorded by my friend Murphy, the next time I met him in Pall Mall. "I tell you what it is, West," said he, "if you go on as you have begun, the Government will be sure to take you up by-and-by. Yes, you may smile, but I'm quite serious; I am behind the scenes, and I know well enough that if a man makes speeches and that sort of thing, he's quite sure to get taken up in time. Bless you! the Government are glad enough to

get hold of a clever fellow when they can find him. I tell you what, I wouldn't mind betting anything that you are in office before half-a-dozen years are over; paymaster-general very likely, or something of that sort. And then, my boy, it's your own fault if you don't get along. You may easily make your way into something snug. A colonial governorship, perhaps, or even the permanent under-secretaryship. By Jove, that's the berth to get. No five years' limitation and a swinking salary. Upon my word, my dear fellow, I assure you I am heartily glad to see you have made such a hit." All which I took to mean that Murphy regarded me as a man who had done him an injury by presuming to take up a line beyond his own course, but that he was nevertheless prepared to condone the offence in consideration of my success.

With this second speech my oratorical efforts ended for the present; but various opportunities occurred

for taking part in military discussions when, however, I was careful not to speak unless I had something which seemed worth saying, and which involved a matter of principle rather than detail. The Government, I think, hardly knew what to make of me, for sometimes I tried to poke fun at their efforts in the way of army organisation, while at others, when they seemed to be moving in the right direction, I did my little best to back them up, to the annoyance apparently of the other side of the House, which thought they had got hold of a convert. But the waste of power involved in party government, and the absurdity of making every question a party question, is never more apparent than in dealing with army business. It must be added that in those days, when party ties were coming to be but slack on both sides of the House, the number of independent members was already large enough to render such a phenomenon no longer surprising.

CHAPTER XIV.—A MIDNIGHT CONVERSATION.

However, on one night we had been rather warmer than usual in committee, and I was walking up Great George Street, feeling a little vexed with myself for having said more than I intended, more especially as my remarks seemed on reflection to savour too much of the "mere soldier," a rôle I was so anxious to avoid, whereas I had intended to express the opinion that it was not the insufficiency of our army expenditure so much as the mode of its application that called for objection. Mr. Merrifield especially would be sure to misunderstand me. Pondering over this and feeling annoyed at having thus lost ground, I was pursuing my way slowly homewards, when

I heard myself addressed by some one overtaking me. There could be no mistaking that clear voice, the peculiar ring differing from that of any other in the House; it was the great Minister himself.

I confess to feeling a little flattered. For an ordinary member who has no private acquaintance with him it is considered in the House rather a compliment to be spoken to by the head of the Government, but here was I being sought out for a private chat. Why is it that we feel a certain nervousness in the presence of great people? It is not always from a sense of superior mental power, for the sensation is as vivid when the superiority is merely social. It

cannot be from a sense of other power, such as a captive might feel in the presence of a conquering Cæsar on Chenghiz, for we experience it equally in cases where our independence is complete. Does it not arise rather from a sense of pride, founded on a sympathy with the just expectations of the great person in question, be it general, minister, or kaiser, that his condescension may not be taken advantage of, and the dignity circumstances surround him with broken through? A feeling, in short, that since the temporary connection is a voluntary one on his part, it behoves you to be especially carefully not to presume upon it?

Such at any rate must I think be my state of mind at this moment, for nothing could be more unaffected than Mr. Merrifield's manner, and had he been any one else instead of the first commoner in England I should have been thoroughly at my ease, which I am bound to say I was not.

"I cannot for the life of me understand, Captain West, how it is that you military men are such alarmists. There really seems to be no satisfying your demands. Look at what has been done during these last few years, and yet to hear you and others of your cloth talk, one might suppose the country was perfectly defenceless."

"Defenceless in one sense only, sir, so far as my judgment goes. I look on any fear of invasion under present circumstances as being quite a delusion; but surely we are defenceless to this extent, that we are perfectly unprepared to fulfil our engagements abroad. In that sense it seems to me to be true to say that the country is defenceless. It could not at the present time protect its honour if called upon to do so."

This word honour was an un-

happy one to use. Not that Mr. Merrifield is not a highly honourable man, but because it carried him off at a tangent, giving him a notion that I was talking in the regular professional slang, a relic of the old pistols-and-coffee days, as one looking out for some foreign nation to tread on our British coat-tails.

"There it is," said he poking the end of his umbrella vehemently into the muddy gravel, for we were now crossing St. James's Park; "this comes of keeping up professional soldiers. We maintain an army to defend us, and they must needs of course be always casting about for fanciful obligations by way of finding occupation. When will mankind come to see the wickedness of war?"

"I may at least claim to go beyond you in detestation of war, Mr. Merrifield, since it has been my fortune, or misfortune, to see something of its reality. And one must see actual war fully to appreciate its worst side. I think wars and fighting utterly abominable; and it seems to me to show how conventional and insincere is our Christianity, that here, at the end of the nineteenth century, we should have no better way of settling disputes. But it won't put an end to war for one country alone to look on quietly at oppression and injustice, because unable to interfere and prevent them."

"I am very glad to find you think so," said the Minister, stopping short and turning towards me; "for I certainly should not have gathered that your opinions went in that direction from what I have heard you say in the House. Still it passes my comprehension how any reasonable man can seriously propose that England should burden herself by competing with the Continental nations, and maintain

a gigantic military establishment merely to keep the peace all over Europe."

Here, then, was a temptation to unfold my views; but it must be resisted. There was clearly not time to talk an essay on military policy between Waterloo Place and Mr. Merrifield's house. Nor would it do to button-hole a Prime Minister in the street. Conversation under such conditions must be condensed.

"Mr. Merrifield, you are nothing if not an economist, if I may take the liberty of saying so. Is it not desirable that the nation should have its money's worth for its money? Why administer the army on archaic principles, rusty armour mingled with firearms? This mode of doing business would not be tolerated in the other departments. Surely common-sense should obtain in army affairs as in every other branch of the public service."

"You speak as if nothing had been done in this way. Have we not been hard at work already for years past, ploughing up abuses and sowing reforms broadcast?"

"In my humble opinion we have scarcely done more than scratch the surface. But I have been detaining you too long. I wish you good-night." And I turned off, becoming aware as I did so that a silent part in our conversation had been taken by the old lady who superintends the crossing at the top of the steps by the column, and who now, with a vacant smile, awaited the penny

which a sense of gallantry seldom permitted my withholding when passing that way! Poor old thing! you, too, have, in dim sort, your warlike instincts; for only last week you were engaged in personal encounter with another venerable female, the porter who guards the column exercising the while, in imitation of the nation he serves, a malevolent neutrality, for he looked on with cynical approval, deaf to my appeal to him to stop the fray, so that I had myself to undertake the duty of enforcing peace, my umbrella interposed between the hostile broomsticks. Would that Mr. Merrifield could have witnessed this illustration of my pacific sentiments!

As it was, I wended my way homeward, feeling but half satisfied with the interview, as generally happens after interrupted conversations. I did not feel sure, on the one hand, that I had made myself thoroughly understood; on the other, I was a little uneasy lest I might have appeared to the Minister to have been what schoolboys call "sucking up" to him. However, the impression left must apparently have been a good one on the whole; for about a fortnight afterwards, when, owing to Mr. Thorowcome's lamented retirement from office, and Lord Stowe's promotion to be Secretary of State for war, a general shuffling took place of minor places, leaving the Paymaster-Generalship to the Forces vacant as the final result, I received a note from Mr. Merrifield offering that post to me.

FRENCH HOME LIFE.

NO. VII.—DRESS.

THERE was a time when men used to dress; when high hats, black coats and trousers, were not invented; when velvet, lace and satin, feathers, curls and ruffles, were masculine adornments; when women had no monopoly of the more delicate materials of costume; when colour, shape, and substance were at the equal disposition of both sexes. The Revolution of 1789, its consequences throughout Europe, the levelling tendencies which resulted from it, brought about equality in men's clothes, and gradually led us to the hideousness of covering which now distinguishes male humanity, and to the apathy which induces us to support it without revolt. The slavery of habit, the tyranny of our neighbours, the terror of opinion, have thus far kept us where we are, and have rendered change impossible; but, for our children's sake, it is indeed to be fondly hoped that a resolute reformer will soon appear, and will deliver us from our bondage. Our period is great in trade, in newspapers, in preserved meat, in war, but it strangles individuality, it chokes all aspirations which lie outside the adopted groove; it has no sympathy with social innovators. We live in such constant need of each other's aid, that we dare not offend each other's prejudices; so that even those amongst us who most keenly feel that a radical change in the dress of men is absolutely necessary, and that its originator would be a benefactor to the universe, do not venture to offer an example. Yet surely we all must feel that the nineteenth century is an epoch of appalling frightfulness; that the gentlemen who now have

their portraits proudly painted in tail-coats and white cravats will be objects of contumely to their grandsons; and that their successors will be utterly unable to comprehend that a generation which was so inventive in politics, in science, and in the details of material progress—which was seemingly so full of liberty of thought—should have had no liberty of action, and should have silently supported the outrageous despotism of ugliness.

We shrink from change because we pretend that it would indicate vanity and affectation, and that the frank adoption of external ornament would be unworthy of the manly natures of our time. But we overlook two facts: the first, that, with all our fancied manliness, we Europeans of to-day do pay singular attention to our vestments, abominable as they are; the second, that when men did dress well, they were quite as much men as we are, and perhaps a little more so. The *Mousquetaires of Louis Treize* wore the most perfect clothes which the world has ever seen; Condé, Raleigh, Henri Quatre, the Cavaliers, were models of costume; but it would be difficult to pretend that they were not gallant soldiers and real men. There is no necessary connexion between effeminacy and graceful dress, there is no inherent unworthiness in the pursuit of outward charm; and though so many of us proclaim that the adornment of men's bodies is an object beneath our care, there is no argument to be found in history or in morals in favour of that pretension. Still, however false the theory, there it is. It holds us and it binds us; its first

result is to make men odious to contemplate; its second consequence is to limit the application of the word "dress." In considering the influence and the rôle of dress in France, we can speak of women only; men are outside the question for the present.

But though we are thus obliged to eliminate half a people from our field of observation, there still remains enough—too much, indeed—to talk about. Women's dress has become of late years one of the great questions of our time; it ranks with poor-laws, emigration, separation between Church and State, and universal suffrage. It has not yet assumed, as those subjects have, the character of a national or political problem; the attention of Governments has not yet been avowedly directed to it; but its effects have been enormous, its influence has been all-pervading, its importance is really graver than that of many measures which Parliaments discuss. The absolute exclusion of the male half of a community from direct participation in outside ornament has led the men to gratify their pent-up vanity, their unsatisfied ideas of taste, by excessive adornment of their women. Vanity must come out somehow; taste—be it good or bad—must have its say; so, as men are limited to the eminently insufficient satisfactions which modern tailors offer them—to the choice between two buttons or one button on their sleeves, to trousers rather loose or very loose—they burst out in their wives and daughters, and seek in them what they are forbidden to enjoy in their own proper persons. The women have no objection to this system—on the contrary, their monopoly is peculiarly agreeable to them; but it would be unjust to attribute to them the whole blame of the excesses which actual Europe, from France down-

wards, offers to our eye. Men have asked for these excesses, have stimulated them, have admired them; for the theory that women dress for women, and men for men, is an illusion: women dress to please, and to please men more than women. They have used their opportunity with audacious recklessness, but the opportunity was created for them. They did not invent it all alone; men have helped them eagerly and cannot escape the responsibility of their acts. They may, however, reasonably invoke extenuating circumstances; they may point to their own miserable condition, and ask if their eyes are to receive no satisfaction anywhere; they may say that they are poor weak creatures, full of frailties, and that they find enjoyment in the contemplation of smart clothes on women, because they cannot admire them on themselves. They do deserve some excuse, in the origin of their action at all events. Their longing for a pleasanter sight than they present themselves was natural and even praiseworthy; but when once they had pushed women on the road, they lost all control over them, women got away, and culminated in the mad elegance, the wild extravagance which distinguished the Second Empire, and which, in some degree at all events, contributed to bring about the rottenness of France.

We should not, however, forget that the dressing of Frenchwomen has a good many aspects. We see the more riotous elements which compose it, because, by their very nature, by the publicity which they seek, they are visible to all spectators; and because the harm which they have done is the talk of Europe. But there are other sides to this great subject: it is not all vanity, frivolity, and expense; it contains intelligence, and tact, and economy, and sense, and art, in their most

curious developments; it is a mixture of good and bad, of foolishness and wisdom, in all their varying shades. But its action, whatever be its form and consequences, is omnipresent; no Frenchwoman escapes from it. Dress, in some way, is her main preoccupation, and that is why the matter has grown so big; why it has risen to the front rank amongst the questions of the moment. This sort of language may look like exaggeration, yet it is rigorously exact, and it is applicable more or less to other countries besides France. The desire to be admired, to produce personal effect through the covering of their bodies, is a general disposition amongst women of European origin. In England it has attacked the lower classes with singular ferocity and with the most deplorable results; in France and elsewhere its manifestations have occurred mainly in the higher strata of society. The feeling which prompts it is, however, identical in all cases—the satisfaction of individual vanity and the longing to tempt men; but the practical working out of the idea in France has a character of its own which we discover nowhere else.

The Frenchwoman has a sentiment of shape and colour, of varieties and fitnesses, which is proper to herself, and which women of other races do not attain, unless by rare exception. She has an instinct of singular precision in everything which relates to dress; her faculty of comparison is marvellously rapid; her innate sense of the laws of harmony in outward things attains the nature of a science. And the word science is employed here in its purest meaning, as significative of knowledge which has been controlled and systematised by the application of method. It is not a haphazard feeling; it is a resolute conviction. It is not an accident of

momentary experience; it is an infused faith, matured and verified by patient study, thought, and observation. Readiness of decision, facility of execution, are the first consequences of this state of mind; there is no hesitation about choice, no uncertainty in selection; the thought is so well prepared beforehand that the most subtle difficulties, the most apparently impossible solutions, are disposed of with unerring certainty. And these solutions are aided by a handiness of fingering, a dexterity of touch, which also are peculiar to the race, and which render possible the incarnation of fantastic fancies which heavier manipulators could never realise. Starting with weapons such as these, served by both head and hand, the Frenchwoman has reached a type of dress which others may strive to imitate but which they do not attain. It is not enough to copy; possession of the self-same objects does not suffice; they must be put on, they must be worn, as their inventors wear them. Here, again, comes in a local virtue which cannot be transplanted: the art of carrying dress is almost purely French; not one Englishwoman in a hundred thousand can disguise her nationality behind foreign clothes; the indefinable peculiarities which early teaching gives are beyond her reach. She may struggle, but she fails, and although she may be quite convinced that she looks the part she wants to play, the least practised eye detects the sham.

But the mere fact of her would-be imitation involves a conscious recognition of the superiority of the type imitated; we only copy what we really like and what we are desirous to resemble. There are Englishwomen who pretend to repel with scorn the notion that they wish their dress to be mistaken for that of Frenchwomen; but if their assumed denial were real and honest, they

would not expose themselves to the necessity of making it; they would say that Englishwomen are themselves, not other people; they would create a model for their own use, peculiar to their land, and though they would gain nothing by the process—for nationally they have no idea of dress—they would at all events escape the charge of counterfeiting. It would be no joy to men if they were to do so; the eye would receive no contentment; our women would be even more abominably got up than they are at present; but we should have the virtuous satisfaction of independence, whatever that may be. Another, and a far more practical solution would be to candidly avow that though we long to dress our wives well, we have not the faintest conception how to set about it, and that, consequently, we openly and frankly follow the most perfect type we can discover, acknowledging our incapacity of both production and imitation, but doing our little best to atone for our self-recognised inferiority, by the humble avowal of its existence, and by the frank acceptance of a pattern. That pattern exists in France, not amongst the rapid people who have made for themselves so unenviable a reputation, but in another and a larger category of true women, who regard their toilette as a legitimate source of charm, as a natural indication of their individual sentiment of art. Those are the women who are good to look at and to follow; for though they do love *chiffons*—though they do devote to their discussion a considerable portion of their time and thoughts—though they, too, like the rest, lift up dress to the altitude of a great question—they do it well and wisely, in a form and with a result that others may be proud to emulate. It is only by dividing the subject into two distinct parts, that the truth can be arrived at;

fast dressing makes up one side of it, good dressing makes up the other: in their moral consequences, as well as in their material respects, the two are entirely different.

Not very long ago nearly all Frenchwomen were *distinguées*; the social influences of the Restoration, and of Louis Philippe's reign, were mainly pure and honest, and they showed out in woman's dress with singular completeness. There was something in the air then which led the French to put grace and charm above all other attributes. On the one hand there was no rowdiness; on the other, there was nothing of what we understand by aristocracy; indeed, that peculiar aspect seems to belong exclusively to what are called the fair-haired races, particularly to the English, the Austrians, and the Swedes; but there was something quite as good, there was distinction. The women knew it, and they cherished their rare merit with infinite care and fondness. To look *comme il faut* was their one dream; and though the exact form of realisation of the phrase varied naturally from year to year, with the fluctuations of passing fashion, the object and the result remained the same. And both were reached without expense; simplicity was the rule, and simplicity means economy. That was the time when nearly everybody wore merinos in the winter, and plain muslin in the summer; where the only extravagance which women perpetrated was in their *chaussure*, their linen, and their gloves; and, delicate as was the dressing of the hands and feet, it did not cost much money then. The revival of Imperial Government brought in abundant money, easy pleasures, and all the excitements and needs of stimulants which are proper to periods of moral decadence. Distinction ceased to satisfy the ambi-

tions of a society which wanted glare, which had grown beyond the calm of moderate and purely feminine contentments, which claimed to show its wealth and its bad taste in action, no matter how. So a new type arose; the woman of the Second Empire replaced the quiet elegant Parisienne who was identified with the Monarchy of July; in came *toilettes tapageuses*, and high-heeled boots, and nakedness, and riotous expenditure. Art-lovers and wise men stood by and mourned.

Not that Frenchwomen's love of dress sprang up in 1852—it was an old, long-cherished worship, deep and faithful; it simply changed its gods with the new master. Its intensity did not grow, for it was already so profound and real that it could not gather farther strength; but it modified its ends and ways, and, from a winning perfectness made up of true female grace and of intelligent applications of the most ordinary means, it swelled into "*Benettonism*." That one word marks the period; it signifies the abandonment of simplicity and of tranquil gentleness, the pursuit of loud effects, in which eccentricities of form and colour were the sole elements; it implies an interior state in harmony with outside manifestations of such a nature. The change was not, however, universal; it was met by indignant protests, by heart-rending lamentations, by bitter criticisms, by satire, mockery, and organised opposition. And yet it rolled along, augmenting from year to year, gaining always fresh adherents, but never conquering a majority. It shocked too many old convictions, and it cost too much to become a nationally accepted movement; it was but an accident of the epoch, born of evanescent causes, and destined to fade away with them. It was limited to certain classes and

to certain places, it never stained out on to the entire population; but, even in its relatively restricted sphere of action it did prodigious harm, and exercised a corrupting influence which has never been exactly measured.

A certain set of women, who, though not numerous, occupied positions so conspicuous and so influential that everything they did was seen and much of it was copied, organised their diversions, their manners, and their dress in a way which, till their time, had never been practised either in or out of France. The peculiar circumstances of the moment rendered their proceedings possible, and not only disposed but materially enabled a good many other women, of lower social rank, to imitate them. The outlay which their extravagance entailed was good for trade; a special category of manufacturers sprung up to minister to their needs, and to earn large profits by their folly. So far their doings had a use, for it would be absurd to complain that rich people spend their money and so contribute to general prosperity. If Mr. Worth, for instance, has made a fortune out of the wants which he supplied, he deserves the credit of having intelligently understood his time, and of having been the first to satisfy a new demand. He has no responsibility in the matter; he happened to possess certain natural gifts of a peculiar kind; he was able to invent dresses with a fertility, a variety, an audacity, and a skill which no one else possessed in the same degree; so the women who wanted dresses came to him. Finding that the current had set his way, he asked prices which represented two separate sorts of goods, material and invention; his rivals could only execute, he was able to create; he naturally claimed to be paid for both, and the world he served ac-

cepted his conditions. It is correct to say "the world," for two-thirds of all Worth's productions have been absorbed by foreigners. The Americans especially have been his largest customers. It is necessary to state this, so that the blame of giving £50 for a plain costume or £200 for a ball-dress may not be attributed to Frenchwomen alone. The truth is, as may easily be ascertained by a little inquiry in the right places, that the great providers of the various details of toilet who cluster round the Rue de la Paix—the makers not only of inconceivable gowns, but of fairy bonnets, adorable jewels, dreamy *chaussures*, and the other thousand delicacies which contribute to make up the modern woman—all work more for the United States and Russia than for France. There are ladies at St. Petersburg who spend £120 a-year in shoes alone—whose annual cost of gloves and stockings would keep six families of weavers—who think it quite natural to pay the journey of their favourite author from the Boulevard to the Newsky Prospect, in order that he may exactly take their measure for a corset. In abusing Frenchwomen for their extravagance—as we all do so willingly—let us be honest enough to remember that not one of them attains the height of folly which is reached by certain ladies whose names it is not necessary to mention, but who are well known on the borders of the Neva and the Hudson, and of whose bills in Paris curious stories might be told, if discretion did not bar the way.

The sin of France lies in the fact that she sets the example: her imitators—some of them at least—go beyond the pattern which she offers; but the original fault is hers. The fault is, however, rather ancient: it was not a product of the Second Empire. Europe has appropriated

French fashions for so many centuries that it is difficult to determine when she began to do so. Furthermore, France is so prodigiously indifferent on the subject, her women care so little whether other women copy them or not, that they cannot be accused of any wilful desire to lead astray the nations round them. Frenchwomen dress for France alone; if others follow them, that is their own affair; it scarcely constitutes in itself a ground for blame against the original models. But still, if extravagance and bad taste are applied amongst the French, the harm they do is all the more extensive because of the vast field of action which they influence, and that is why their indirect responsibility is great and real. Of course they repudiate it with indignation; of course they say that as they impose their will on no one, as all the women of the earth are free to cover themselves as they like, it is most unfair to impute to them the noisy dressing which has grown up in so many countries during the last twenty years. Their objection is specious, but insufficient; whether they like it or not, monarchs must accept the consequences of their position. France is the acknowledged Queen of dress, and, as such, she cannot escape from the duties and the charges which surround all crowns. That her outlying subjects are willing slaves is true—that she claims no authority over them is perfectly exact; but those facts do not efface the moral responsibility which attaches to all those who stand in high places, and have thereby become accepted models. So long as Frenchwomen were what they used to be thirty years ago, they did their duty to themselves and to humanity—they offered an example of perfect dress, and so bore usefully the burden of their royalty; but when they began to

fling aside the wise precepts of their mothers, when they introduced mere money into the composition of their effect, when grace and charm were regarded as inferior ends, when their one object was to dazzle and bewilder, then they at once ceased to deserve the place which they had so long held; they became a danger, and ought to have been dethroned. But they held their sceptre by divine right; their vassals never thought of getting up a revolution to turn them out; the slaves continued to obey—they followed on with unfatigued servility, as the populace of Rome bowed down before the Cæsars.

It is, however, in its French results, rather than in its outside bearings, that the movement of women's clothes since 1852 interests us here. It is its influence on France that we have to consider. It may at once be said that that influence was infinitely less extensive and less serious than has generally been supposed. The outbreak of exaggeration was so violent in certain classes of society, that, by its mere glitter, it seemed to be vastly more important and more widespread than it was in fact. Its vivid glare gave it a character of universality which it never really possessed; its appearance of omnipresence was deceptive, and was brought about solely by the excessive publicity of the goings-on of its promoters. If the women who resolutely adopted fast dressing could have been counted, it is probable that not fifty thousand of them would have been found in the whole of France. But they made noise enough for five millions, and so misled the lookers-on, who fancied that such a *tapage* could not possibly be the work of a small set of people, and who therefore, not unnaturally, perhaps, ascribed its production to the entire nation. The

truth is, as has been already said, that the example was first given by a few ladies who liked strong amusements, and whose rank and social power enabled them to externally defy opinion and to rely on being obsequiously imitated by the group immediately around them. But the real women of France resisted the attempt at its outset; they saw no gain to taste or charm in the ways which the Second Empire inaugurated; they persistently opposed them; and when, ten years afterwards, the evil had reached its climax, they who had in no way contributed to it shook their heads and sadly said, "A curious book will some day be written on the harm which Madame A. and her belongings have done to France." They expressed this opinion with conviction, for they thought the ill laid deep; they, like all the rest of the spectators, believed that the contagion had laid hold of the majority, and that its consequences would be durable. This, however, was an illusion; the rapid dresses and rowdy ways, which seemed to have become a system, have disappeared with the state of things which caused them; their life was ephemeral; they did much damage while they lasted, but their time is over: Frenchwomen are becoming themselves once more.

And yet the movement was accompanied by features which gave it an appearance of vitality and force, and contributed to deceive even the most experienced judges of social follies. It had a literature of its own; it had Feydeau's novels, Sardou's plays, and that peculiar newspaper the '*Vie Parisienne*.' It was backed up by money, by Court favour, by the most exciting forms of pleasure, by a good deal of sharp writing, by the personal action of men and women of position. It

succeeded in thoroughly depraving public taste within the limit of its action. The toilet of the actresses of the Gymnase, the Variétés, and the Vaudeville were accepted topics of conversation; Jules Janin—the critic, the judge, the thinker—wrote *feuilletons* upon them in the *grave Débats*, and did not seem to recognise that he thereby degraded his pen and his reputation. The fancy balls at the *Affaires Etrangères* and the Ministry of Marine were such big events that they absorbed attention a month before and afterwards; and stories were eagerly told and listened to about duchesses and princesses who took tea with Mr. Worth at five o'clock to discuss the last details of the composition of their costumes, and who drove back to him at 10 P. M. on their road to the entertainment, in order to submit their adornments to one final touch from his skillful hand. As skirts grew longer, bodies grew shorter; and the first half of Levassor's description of a ballet-girl's dress, "*Une robe qui ne commence qu'à peine et qui finit tout-de-suite,*" became exactly applicable to the upper part of what was called an evening toilet. Some people, indeed, were inclined to think that it was an exaggeration to pretend that it "scarcely began," and that it would be far more exact to assert that it did not begin at all.

It was a curious period. The pursuit of material satisfactions, of the glorification of vanity, was the main object of the women who dressed and of the men who hung about them. Every lady spent all she had, and a good many got copiously into debt; faces were laboriously and pictorially prepared for the day's work; the stinginesses of nature were more than ever compensated by various devices adapted to various parts of the body—be-

fore, behind, above, below; somebody else's hair, added to wadding and heels, composed a charming creature. The clothes which were put over these under preparations were violent in form and colour; all the ordinary theories and rules of art were wilfully disregarded; velvet was worn in the summer—green, yellow, and red were resolutely mixed. Luxury reached so furious a development that even M. Dupin—who, after serving thirteen governments with unvarying fidelity, might have been supposed to be able to stand a good deal—burst out in the Senate with a moral speech against the women of his time; but the ladies it was meant for read it in the '*Moniteur*' next morning, laughed, and said, "Poor old Dupin!" That was what he got for his trouble. It needed a stronger hand than his to stop the wave. And yet, with all this noise and splashing, the wave did not really hold much water; it was made up of surface foam. It seemed to cover almost the entire sea of life, but it had no depth, and even its superficial area was vastly less than was supposed. The majority of women are good and honest, and are more inclined to the discharge of quiet duties than to the pursuit of reckless pleasure; it was but a minority—a small minority—which went in for joy and dress, and adopted them as the sole object of existence. Of course a good many of the quiet wives and mothers were a little tempted by the glitter round them; they would not have been Frenchwomen if they had been quite insensible to the glory of other people's clothes, but their good sense and their innate love of honesty protected them from danger; they stood by in safety; they went on dressing mildly, and limited their outlay to what their husbands gave them. There are, however, enough

"frisky matrons" and foolish virgins on this earth to supply material for any madness which fashion may set going. There are abundant asses among the men that modern civilisation has produced who are always ready to applaud excesses, even if they have to pay for them. So, with example from above and imitation from below, rowdy dressing and rowdy manners became typical of the period, and will be long remembered as having constituted one of the worst of the social aspects of the Second Empire.

Not that the members of the group who dressed were morally much worse than the people who live for pleasure in other lands. There is a singular equality in the dissemination of vice and virtue. The accidents of exterior development which come and go with every generation affect but little more than mere externals; they do not exercise any real influence on the inner condition of a nation, unless, indeed, they last long enough to acquire a permanent hold of its thought and action. Women who seek solely for diversion are not likely anywhere to do their duty to their children; and whether they be English, French, or Russian, their neglect of home duties is probably everywhere the same. Worldliness, whatever be its form, is not a peculiarity of a race or of an epoch; frivolity, vanity, and lust of the eyes have been pretty general since the world was made, and it would be untrue and unjust to describe them as monopolies of the women of the Second Empire. But however founded this reservation may be, those women did go singularly far in the pursuit of contemptible enjoyments; they did their very utmost to damage their generation by destroying the higher objects of society; and if other women do the same in varying degree, that

fact does not excuse the Parisians for setting the example.

Perhaps, however, the men merit more blame than the women, for the latter are only what the former make them. It is a question of supply and demand: when men want ladies round them, women become ladies; when men want the other thing, women become the other thing. They model themselves according to the requirements of their masters, and the fluctuations of their type and manners may always be taken as a tolerably safe indication of the male tendencies of the period. Men have therefore but small right to complain if the result be bad; it is mainly their own work: they deserve credit if the end is worthy; they must take the greater part of the blame if it be the contrary. It is they who have lifted up *cocottes* into the detestable prominence which they occupy in Paris; it is they who have led other women to suppose that the *cocotte* aspect is the one which pleases men, and which all women whose desire is to please must necessarily pursue. We foreigners may attribute all this folly to the women who perpetrate it; but that is unfair: the greatest sinners are the men who ask for it. Women follow and obey far more than they originate. Of course this argument applies to the principle alone, and does not reach the details: there men are outside the question; they have no hand in the compilation of grotesque adornments; they like them, but they do not invent them. They do not wish their wives to spend £8000 a-year apiece on clothes, but they pay the bill because its very bigness flatters them; it is a merit in their eyes to have a wife who costs so much. This is a consequence, exaggerated and absurd, but still a consequence

of the ugliness to which they are themselves condemned: when men become able to dress themselves with freedom they will cease to feel pride in overdressing the women around them.

The effect of these extravagances has necessarily been to almost destroy family life for the people who have indulged in them. There are women in France—a good many, too—who dress only for their husbands and their firesides, who think that they do their duty to God and themselves in trying to make their homes attractive to their proprietors, and who imagine rightly that they serve that purpose by adorning their own persons for the greater delectation of legitimate spectators. But the quick-living ladies, who, until a short time ago, lived for the world at large, did not content themselves with any such restricted field of action. One admirer did not satisfy their eager minds; they went in for multitude, and adopted means which were as large as the end they had in view. That some of them really liked their husbands, and had a sort of tenderness for their children, is not at all impossible; but as it is extremely difficult to associate indoor love with outside vanities, the former was pretty often abandoned in order to be better able to attend to the latter. It would be particularly useless to draw harrowing pictures of worldliness, and of the damage which it has done to family joys in France, for its effects are pretty much the same in all the capitals of Europe. Piccadilly can tell us as much about it as we can learn in the Champs Elysées. We all perfectly well know what it looks like and what it produces, only it is infinitely pleasanter to abuse it in the French than in ourselves. It is very soothing to discuss the mote in our brother's

eye; so we go in at the iniquities of France, as if we were all innocence and virtue on this side. It is true that the Parisiennes do encourage us to this sort of action, for they have always exposed their faults to the universe with a frankness and a completeness of which we can discover no example elsewhere. Other people cover themselves with hypocrisies and shams; but as the "nation de trop de paroles" does not seem, in this respect at least, to care what its neighbours think, it shows itself as it is. Socially there is very little humbug and scarcely any snobbishness in France. There is no recognised upper class to struggle after or to imitate. Great as are the demerits of the country in its politico-moral developments, it is singularly free from the disposition either to revere and copy rank, or to veil its passing tendencies. We see the French pretty nearly as they are; the good and the bad in them come out with full distinctness; and that is one of the reasons why it is so delightfully easy for us superior people to call them hard names.

The bad, however, was so terribly prominent amongst the riotous society of the ante-Sedan period, that there is really some excuse for insisting on it. Since the Regency we have not seen such a wilful apotheosis of pleasure as those twenty years produced; and of all the external forms which the movement assumed, woman's dress was the most marked and most evident. Whether that dress was a cause or a result is rather difficult to determine; but its action, though limited to a certain set, was as great, within its sphere, as that of any other of the deleterious springs which were at work. It is true that there is an amusing side to the question; but so there is to the

history of a good many other of the damaging influences to which life is exposed. It is true that the pictures of contemporaneous society with which the '*Vie Parisienne*' stimulated every Saturday the appetites of its readers were extremely clever and abundantly diverting. It is true that the realities, the actualities, of daily talk and daily ways, were often provocative of much laughter (more than France hears now); but after all, laughter may be bought at too high a price—and so it was in those times. Brightness and gaiety are cheering and tempting ends to follow, especially when life is young; but they are none the less real if they are innocent and not too dear. The Second Empire, however, was not particularly innocent, and no one will accuse it of having led to cheapness. It broke down the honest and wise social traditions which preceded it, it enthroned extravagance, it lowered both men and women; and one of its most active agents towards these results was probably the style of dress which it inaugurated.

But whatever may have been the degree of moral harm which was thus generated, it was, relatively, even less conspicuous than the odious corruption of taste and type which grew up during those twenty years. Regarded as a form of art—and it certainly ought to be so considered—women's dress is a manifest indication of current ideas on form and colour. It does not constitute a mere ornament of the body. It is not limited to the expression of individuality of conception, or of any personal sentiment of fitness (though that is one of the very best developments which it can assume); it is, or ought to be, an outward sign of the art tendencies of an

epoch. Not of art in the restricted sense which so many of us attribute to the word, the narrow art of pictures, and of statues, and of sculpture, but of the universal harmonies of shapes and tints which nature shows us how to realise, and which, at many periods of the world's history, men and women have felt and followed. This is the art which so disposes objects round us that each presents the highest form which it is susceptible of attaining, and produces in us the keenest satisfactions which the eye can convey. This is the art through which home adornment in furniture, in dress, achieves the end of rendering life pleasanter, and of showing us how great results can be obtained by little means, how truth and charm and taste can be insensibly inculcated by the daily sight of the things we live with. The fashions of the Empire offered no such teaching; glare and eccentricity were their distinguishing characteristics; they did not contain one sign of the higher views which the choice of dress ought always to pursue; they were excessive in every detail, especially in cost. The caricatures of the period will hand down to posterity a tolerably correct knowledge of what the streets and drawing-rooms of Paris looked like between December 1851 and September 1870. French grandchildren will indeed mock at the aspect of the women we have known, at their crinolines four yards round, and, five years later, at their narrow skirts clinging round their legs. They will recognise in them what they really were, "*des femmes remplies de bijoux et d'elles-mêmes*," with small room for love of other people, and with a permanent disposition to disobey all the rules which ought to guide the choice of feminine costume. When all possible varieties of form had been exhausted, the ladies of

the period took up colour, and if Germany had not intervened, they would soon have worn out colour too, and have had nothing left to choose from. The reaction which has now set in is against all colour; women are wearing tints which have no name, which never were real or fresh or true, but which still do not quite reach the tone which we design by "faded;" they are essentially "des couleurs provisoires," as Paris calls them, in sympathy with the sort of government which France just now possesses, neither Monarchy nor Republic, neither reality nor fiction, neither seed nor flower. It really is amusing to see dress thus fit itself to the accidents of politics. From respectable under Louis Philippe, it became noisy under the Empire, and has now turned to "provisional" under M. Thiers. Whatever be its next stage, we may, at all events, be sure that it will never grow "definitive." Its essence is to change, not only with dynasties, but with all the passing fancies which caprice may set afloat. It is as well that it should be so, for if the fashions of the Empire had lasted, there would have been an end of all taste in France; such treatment would have suffocated it. It is true that the exact measure of the style of a period can scarcely be arrived at by contemporaries; prejudice and habit blind us too much to allow us to exercise discriminating judgment on objects which surround us. We can recognise the superiority of the toilet of both men and women during the epoch which stretched from the thirteenth to the sixteenth Louis; we can all see how ungraceful dress was under the Valois, the Directory, and the First Empire; but we cannot form an equally sure opinion with reference to ourselves, partly because we are accustomed to

what we live with, partly because the differences which arise from year to year involve only modifications of detail, with no marked change of character or type. As yet, although we can only compare the details of different moments of our generation, we can, at all events, give a verdict on them between themselves, and can, within that limit, assign to the ephemeral fashions of the reign of Napoleon III. their little place in history. A detestably bad one it is. Rarely has the theory of dress assumed a less satisfactory expression than during those twenty years amongst the women who, whether we like it or not, we must take as typical of the time. Rarely has a momentary rush of extravagance, in all its forms, exercised a worse influence, artistically, on those who were subjected to it.

It is scarcely necessary to offer any arguments in proof of this; but if there should still be people who, by long custom (they can have no better motive), should wish to defend the piece in which they have played a part, let them explain—if anyhow they can—the merit of a system which is based on nothing but the deification of money. Since the Byzantines put gold and silver into pictures, and called it art, we have had no similar example of the adoration of mere glitter. Happily it is over; and if the empire should get back—which is an eventuality not to be disregarded—we may presume that it will not repeat the error, but will offer another model to its restored subjects.

But even the Empire did not crush out the true Frenchwoman; she lived through it, unaffected by examples; she maintained the old tradition in silent corners; she is coming out again in her ancient wisdom; she is once more ready to show Europe what a woman's dress

ought to symbolise. Her principle always has been that the brightest forms, the most admirable results, are attainable by the simplest means, and that they are utterly independent of the fictitious splendours which bank-notes pay for. She has not abandoned the great theory that women should be women always; that when they drift to rowdiness they lose their charm; that distinction is the one end worth struggling for. And here it should be noticed that distinction is not, necessarily, a pure gift of nature. Its noblest manifestations are, of course, dependent on physical conditions which no use of taste, however cunning, can thoroughly replace; but taste can do a vast deal to atone for corporeal insufficiencies, and, as regards dress alone, it is the one guide to perfectness. But taste, in this case, means wisdom, tact, and common-sense, as well as the able handling of form and colour. Taste means suitableness in everything—in the choice of substances and shapes and tints which fit the social condition of the wearer as well as her personal aspect. It means not only the pursuit of a harmonious whole, but the diligent appropriation of all the smaller delicacies of detail which true women ought to practice, so that every element of their dress may support critical examination, so that no "faults of spelling" may be discovered by an investigating eye. And it means the realisation of all this with little money. This was what most Frenchwomen used to reach; this is what many of them have never forgotten; it is to this they are coming back. When they have done so thoroughly the world may safely copy them once more.

To a woman of the middle class in France dress involves an expenditure of £60 a-year: within that limit she can let her imagination

travel; beyond it lie forbidden things. Now, considering that £60 is the price of one ordinary gown for certain other people, it is not easy to understand how Madame Somebody, whose husband is a small barrister or a Government clerk, who owns two children, and whose entire annual income is £440, can be got up as she is. And yet she does it, and a vast number of her sort do it too, with identical success. The result is seemingly out of all proportion with the means, but that is only an optical illusion. The £60 form but one element in the means; we do not see the rest unless we look very closely for it; but when we have discovered the supplementary sources of action which contribute to the end produced, we are almost inclined to think that the £60 are a superfluity, and that the whole thing might just as well be managed without any money at all. Amongst the many employments of human ingenuity it would be difficult to select one in which inventiveness, resolute purpose, dexterity of handling, and especially utilisation of the very smallest chances, are set to work with more persistence or more intelligence. There is assuredly no similar example of the victory which cleverness can win in battle against poverty. But triumph is attainable solely by personal action; in such a struggle nothing can be delegated to others; the author must do everything herself—not, perhaps, the sewing, which is a merely mechanical act, but the devising, the arranging, the fitting, the ordaining, and, more than all, the organising of the whole, so that it may present unity of effect. Furthermore, as Frenchwomen of the class we are talking of are perpetually restoring their old clothes, and adapting them to new necessities, it is clear that no one else

could serve them, for no one else knows what they possess. Their habit of directly governing their dress is not, however, peculiar to this or any other class. No Frenchwoman who respects her own opinion will allow herself to be guided by either a *couturière* or a *femme-de-chambre*. She lets them cut and sew, but she originates herself, knowing, by her instinct, that in no other way can she make her toilet what it ought to be—representative of herself. The main features of the dressing of the true Parisienne—of the woman who is always charming, despite her empty purse—are individuality, harmony, and finished detail.

It is very easy to talk about the process in this loose way; but it is almost impossible to describe it accurately, especially so as to enable others to try their hand at it. The end is peculiar to France. It cannot be attained unless it be realised by the imagination before it is produced materially. To say "I will have a black silk dress" is an abstract proposition, containing no sort of specific meaning beyond that which strictly belongs to the three words which form it. But to the true female mind the phrase a "black silk dress" is susceptible of a thousand senses and of as many associations, particularly to women who, both by pecuniary necessity and by personal disposition, do not stumble, haphazard, into their clothes, but carefully weigh them out and use much comparison. Their work is essentially one of choice and calculation, restricted, of course, in execution, by economy and by the accidents of individual talent, but absolutely limitless in general theory and idea. A black silk dress may assume almost as many forms as sunset clouds can offer. It is in selection between these

forms—it is in the character and expression given to the product—that the idiosyncrasies of the wearer come to light, that the woman shows out herself, that the Parisienne stands alone. The gown is, however, but one element of the whole—the largest and most apparent, it is true, but not the most important, for a cotton dress worth fifteen francs may speak up with equal power, and may proclaim with as loud a voice, the merit of its author. The boots, the gloves, the sash, the hat, the parasol, the linen above all, subscribe more largely still to the tone and type of a well-dressed woman: it is to them that the experienced eye turns curiously in order to determine the exact degree of her perfection in this branch of merit. No one who really knows and feels what dress ought to imply will limit observation to a skirt; the dissection will be rapid but complete; it will extend to every detail—hands, feet, hair, and undergarments, will each receive a scrutinising glance, and opinion will be formed on the assemblage of them all, not on any single element. In Paris, and elsewhere in France, there are crowds of women who come out reproachless from these ruthless examinations, the reason being that they know beforehand that they will be subjected to them, and prepare accordingly. It is not amongst cunning artists such as these that one sees jewels worn in the early morning, or gloves with holes in them, or stockings dangling round the ankles, twisted like the screw of a music-stool, or hanging helplessly like Turkish trousers. It is not they whose linen ever shows a stain, or who add coarse embroidery to their hidden vestments. Delicacy and fitness are their immediate means, harmony their object, charm their final end; and they reach it all.

These are true women in one of the most feminine senses of the title—it is they who brighten up so many homes in France—it is they who of late years have angrily resisted the barbarian onslaughts of money and bad taste—it is they who have preserved unweakened the traditions of their mothers—it is to them that we now should look for teaching and example. But they do not think of us; their field of action is indoors; they do not care for foreign imitators; their work is done for themselves and their own children. Their girls grow up in contact with sound theories on dress, in constant practice of the delicate science of self-adornment, but with the conviction that its highest truths lie in simplicity, in the resolute avoidance of all violence, of all waste, of all unnecessary outlay. At fourteen years old, those girls can cut out their own dresses; at ten they can trim bonnets, and can hold forth learnedly on the theory exhibited in their mother's practice. Education such as this makes wonderfully handy women; they know how to use their fingers for pretty nearly everything. Skill in dress leads on to other skills; the sentiment of art in its personal application, opens out the mind to its larger teachings. Regarded from this point of view—which, though it may seem exaggerated to persons who hear of it for the first time, is incontestably sound—Dress acquires a new use; it ceases to be an exhibition of vanity, or of low-class ability; it takes its place amongst the useful elements of instruction; it helps women along the road to knowledge.

But, alas! this pretty picture does not apply to everybody. It is so pleasant that it is particularly disagreeable to turn away from it to the crowds of utterly incompetent,

blind-eyed, ordinary people, who are so terribly abundant in French departments, who are incapable of comprehending the most elementary of the laws of fitness; who wear leather boots with a muslin dress; cameo brooches stuck in the middle of their chests; feathers, flowers, and lace in resolute confusion—really just like Englishwomen. Sins of this kind do not shock them: the poor creatures do not see them; they suppose it is all right, and have no qualms of conscience. And yet, next door to them, there may be one of those perfect models we were talking of just now—a model with no students and no admirers, like that rose we heard of in our youth, which wasted its sweetness on the desert air. This seems to show that the faculty of rightly appreciating dress is either a natural gift or a result of early teaching; anyhow, it is probable that it is difficult to acquire it in after-life, unless in rare cases and under special circumstances of example and assistance. It shows, also, that though the highest types of dressing are to be found in France, they are not a necessary property of the entire nation. They must be regarded as developments of a special capacity under favourable conditions, rather than as an inherent right. The better class of Frenchwomen have grown slowly, with each other's help, to the height which they have now attained; their talent has become transmissible to their children (Mr. Darwin has not thought of that example of natural selection), but unequally and capriciously; they have not communicated it to the whole crowd round them, and the crowd remains incapable of imitation, or even of comprehension. It does not know how much a woman augments her power by a well-calculated use of carefully-

selected ornament, or how a mother can help her child to acquire the appreciation of shape and colour by the study of her daily dress.

Regarded as one of the occupations which ought to fill up women's time at home, the preparation of clothes is natural and legitimate. All the world cannot be rich enough to pass its time in pleasure or in intellectual pastimes; the mass of us spend our lives with less money than we should like to have, and in a consequent constant effort to diminish our impecuniosity by our labour. Men trade and speculate, and do various other things for this end; women, who, unless exceptionally, have no direct power of earning cash, can only try to satisfy their longings by indoor work for their own account. Foolish people, who think it beneath their grandeur to make their own gowns and bonnets, are rare in France; there, even the richer classes generally consider it to be a

duty to help themselves to some degree, and to know, at all events, how to sew.

But whether or not it be admitted that the subject is susceptible of these accessory merits, most of us will own that a well-dressed woman is an agreeable thing to look at. We do not all agree as to what a well-dressed woman is, and there is room for a very pretty quarrel between the advocates of French and English views upon the matter; but the principle remains unimpaired, even though its forms of realisation are open to discussion. Even in France itself, as we have seen, there has been a fight between two types; one of them is nearly suppressed at last, and the other one is slowly regaining its old supremacy; but we English people, after all, can regard it only as an admirable curiosity: we are incapable of imitating it, for the same reason which prevents our learning how to cook—our women cannot do it.

THE PUNDRAPORE RESIDENCY.

FEW events have caused so great a sensation among Indian officials as did the appearance of a 'Gazette' announcing the appointment of Captain Jones of the 27th Bengal Cavalry—the Junglywallahs—to the political agency of the Pundrapore State. The causes of an Afghan war had been more easily accounted for than the selection of a man who could not command an ounce of interest from head to tail of the service. The post was one of the most coveted appointments in India. Sir Rothie Murkus had, with tears in his eyes, refused the entreaties of a host of Gushingtons, Rattles, and Pendlows, whose genealogical trees might have convinced the most skeptical of their special fitness for the Pundrapore Residency. The same venerable statesman affirmed to his disappointed relatives that the wires were pulled by a hand which he could not venture to oppose. What was this mystery of the hidden hand? All Calcutta talked of nothing else; and from Cossipore to Garden Reach the wonderful appointment of Captain Jones to the Pundrapore Residency was in everybody's mouth. No one had more reason to be surprised than the officer who was thus unexpectedly brought before the public. When Captain Jones was solemnly interrogated by his colonel in the presence of the brigadier and other field-officers of the station, he declared, upon his honour as an officer and a gentleman, that he had not a single relative either in the Court of Directors or in the Board of Control—that he had never seen the Governor-General—and that he hardly knew the names of the members of Council or secretaries

to Government. And upon cross-examination he was compelled to acknowledge that the only connection between his family and India arose from his uncle having kept a grocer's shop in the East India Docks, where the old man had amassed enough of money to purchase Company's paper, and to procure a cavalry cadetship for his nephew. Had the occasion been one of less importance, Jones would have scrupled to be so frank with his brother officers. He had hitherto been somewhat reticent upon the subject of his family, with the exception of a few obscure hints that its origin was Welsh and princely. But Captain Jones felt that romancing would be dangerous at such a juncture; and the brigadier went away more puzzled than before.

Had Jones seen his name in the 'Gazette' as a Knight Commander of the Bath, it would not have occasioned him more surprise than did the notification of his appointment to the Pundrapore Residency. To purchase out his seniors step by step, and to retire from the service in process of time with the title of Colonel, had been the very moderate limit of Jones's ambition. His leisure moments were frequently devoted to the composition of epitaphs, in which he described himself as having been "for years The Gallant and Resolute Leader of the 27th Bengal Cavalry—the Junglywallahs," "The Brave and Accomplished Commandant," "Who lived like a Soldier and died like a Christian," with many other similar expressions of self-appreciation. Treasured up in one corner of his desk lay a design for a mural tablet, with an inscription as long

as a modern biography. This, as Jones had told Cornet Sniggers in confidence, was a memorial that his sorrowing relatives would probably erect in Cheltenham Church, near which town he meant to set up his staff when his campaigning days were over. Sniggers also informed the mess that Jones had shown him the plan of a cenotaph overshadowed by two palm-trees, erected, as the legend said, "By his grateful and devoted soldiers, Who revered him as a Father, And worshipped him as a Leader." In the design for this remarkable piece of sculpture, two native troopers, in the flowing turbans and tight-fitting jackets of the Junglywallahs, were represented as bending over their wounded or dying commander, whose arm was strained in the effort to wave above his head his broken sword. Round the base were skulls, cross-bones, and other mortuary emblems, understood to be the remains of Sikhs and Afghans who had fallen by the sabre of the recumbent warrior. The tears had stood in Jones's eyes as he showed these tributes of affection to his subaltern, who gave, in turn, many assurances of sympathy and promises of secrecy. These promises did not, however, prevent Sniggers from acquainting the mess with the little weakness of their brother officer; and for many a day after, Jones had to submit to being dubbed "Old Mortality" at the mess-table of the Junglywallahs.

Probably the whole Bengal army did not contain a more ungainly figure than that of the new Resident. He stood six feet high, with a thin chest and round shoulders. The knees of his long spindle-legs were constantly coming into collision, and the natural pallor of his lean sallow face was set off by a stiff black mustache, gaunt cheeks, and a chin generally half-shaven. All the rid-

ing-masters in her Majesty's service could not have given him a decent seat in the saddle within the compass of an ordinary life-time; nor could the smartest drill-sergeant in India have induced him to keep the step for five successive minutes when walking in company. It was a joke in the regiment that Jones turned away his head when fencing, and shut his eyes when shooting. His unprepossessing appearance might have passed unnoticed but for the *gaucherie* of his manner, which in the society of ladies was especially painful. At balls, where Jones underwent self-torments to make himself agreeable, it was remarked that everybody whom he asked to dance was engaged, and that even the permanent wall-flowers found pretexts for declining his attentions. It was at Bustlepoore, where the Commander-in-Chief was holding a levee about the beginning of the first Sikh war, that Jones in making his bow, jerked his head so close to his Excellency's stomach, that Sir George started back and demanded with an oath "who the clumsy ogre was?" Jones passed along with his white face yet a shade whiter, and something like tears in his grey eyes, but no one ever heard him complain of the Chief's rudeness; and old Colonel Gargoyle of the Junglywallahs, whose word was law upon all matters of etiquette, declared that Jones was more of a gentleman than Sir George Blitzen.

The Pundrapore Residency was one of the best pieces of patronage in the hands of the Bengal Government. Successive Governor-Generals had filled the appointment with their favourite aides-de-camp and private secretaries; and when there was nobody in particular to be provided for, a distinguished officer from either branch of the public service had generally been selected.

The last Resident, the Hon. Captain Grantley, was the near relative of a former Governor-General, and he consequently enjoyed a full measure of the present ruler's hatred. And his lordship was at no loss for opportunities of evincing his feelings towards Captain Grantley. The Pundrapore territories were at that time in what the Calcutta newspapers call a state of chronic anarchy. Mozuffer Jung, the last ruler, a politic Mussulman, who had kept friends with all parties, had been dead for about two years. His youngest and favourite wife, a Persian beauty who had cost five thousand rupees at Herat, had managed to secure the regency of the State, the custody of her infant son, and the control over the other three wives and miscellaneous female appurtenances of the Harem. The British Government, knowing the favourite Begum's capacity for intrigue and mischief-making, strongly opposed this arrangement; and the late Nawab had been incessantly urged to commit the administration of the State to his Prime Minister, a Mahratta Brahmin, upon whose fidelity and steadfastness the Government could with confidence rely. But it soon became apparent that Captain Grantley would do little to promote the policy of Government. The fair Persian made the best of the opportunities which her secluded life afforded, to captivate the Resident soon after his arrival at Pundrapore; and Captain Grantley was a man of too much gallantry and too little prudence to decline the flirtation. The result was that he allowed himself to become the instrument of carrying out the Begum's projects, and of thwarting the instructions which Sir Rothie Murkus, the Foreign Secretary, kept continually dinning into his ears. After the Nawab's death, the Be-

gum became less guarded in her intrigues, and Captain Grantley still more infatuated. The Calcutta papers clamoured for his withdrawal, and "Brutus," and "Indignation," and "True Briton," and "Anglo-Indian," and all the other *noms de plume* of newspaper letter-writers, were constantly employed to express the public disgust at Captain Grantley's proceedings. But Captain Grantley's noble relative was now all-powerful in the Board of Control; and so the Captain snapped his fingers at the Calcutta press, for he knew that the Governor-General would not dare to adopt its extreme suggestions.

There was then an uneasy feeling among the British in Hindostan. The Sikhs had not yet been finally crushed, and their chieftains were swaggering about through the Punjab, talking of the speedy approach of the time when Runjeet would drive the British into the sea. Dost Mahomed, too, was looking down from Cabul with a troubled countenance at the progress of the red-coated Kaffirs. And, what was still more serious, there was much discontent among the powerful Rajpoot chieftains, who fretted impatiently at the checks imposed by the British upon the arbitrary exercise of their feudal power. In all intrigues of the day the Begum of Pundrapore took a prominent part. Her agents were in every petty court, fomenting all causes of discontent, and encouraging the Rajahs to unite together for the assertion of their independence. Symptoms of open disaffection had been more than once manifested in Pundrapore, until the Government thought it necessary to impress upon the chiefs the uselessness of insubordination by a display of troops. Sir George Blitzen, with a brilliant staff, escorted by a cavalry regi-

ment, and by large detachments of infantry and artillery, entered Pundrapore with the ostensible object of paying his respects to the Begum. Sir George was a courtier of the Carlton House and Pavilion school, and his first impulse was to pacify the State by subduing the heart of its ruler. But the Begum would listen to none of his fine speeches. She was at no loss to divine what had procured her the honour of his Excellency's visit, and she determined to express her dislike for the Government by slighting its representative. A grand durbar was held in the palace for his Excellency's reception, and Sir George took his seat upon the right hand of the Begum with so many high-flown compliments and expressions of regard, that Captain Gulstan, his Persian Secretary, could hardly find words to convey to the Begum the due warmth of the Chief's affection. Her Highness in turn complimented Sir George, and expressed her sorrow that his Excellency should be compelled to serve so far from his native country at his advanced age. How sad it was that the young Maharanee of Frangistan should have no younger warriors to command her forces, that she must send the father of grandfathers to lead her soldiers in India. The well-padded breast of Sir George quivered with scarce concealed anger at the taunt, as Gulstan tremblingly translated it, toning down the sneer as much as he dared. It was Sir George's weakness to look twenty years younger than his age; and barber, dentist, and tailor had done their utmost to support the delusion. This was but the beginning of hostilities; and affront after affront, but always within the bounds of diplomatic courtesy, was offered to his Excellency during his stay in Pundrapore, until he began to pray de-

voutly that the state would really revolt, that he might obtain some satisfaction for the slights he was receiving. If anything could have added to the bitterness of these affronts, it would have been the studied deference with which the Begum treated Captain Grantley's counsels. Sir George did his best to pay back the Begum by bullying her favourite; but Captain Grantley, in his diplomatic capacity, was almost wholly independent of the military authorities, and he did not give himself much trouble about what his Excellency said or did. Sir George at length marched out of Pundrapore in a fury, and reported to the Government that the only salvation for the Pundrapore State was the deposition of the Begum, and the immediate recall and degradation of the Resident. The former could only be done with the authority of the Board of Control, and there was little hope that its members would assume so grave a responsibility to gratify Sir George, who was no favourite in Cannon Row. On the other hand, Captain Grantley's noble protector was the referee of the Board upon all political questions, and the Governor-General was too prudent a statesman to draw down upon himself the ire of his predecessor by the recall of the Resident. Fortunately for his Excellency, the residency of Kaifabad just then fell vacant, and to this post Captain Grantley was at once promoted down-stairs. His salary was not diminished, and as his duties were confined to the payment of an annual pension, and the forwarding of a weekly budget of complaints on the part of the recipient to the Foreign Office, he had little ground for grumbling; and it was at this juncture that Captain Jones took charge of the Pundrapore Residency.

II.

The Junglywallahs gave a dinner to their departing comrade, and said so many kind things about him that Jones really began to believe in himself, and to think that the Governor-General had shown great discrimination in filling up the Pundrapore agency.

"I should not wonder, my boy," said old Gargoyle, after many bumpers of "Simpkin" had been quaffed to the success of the new diplomatist, "but that, after all, you owe your success to the Begum herself. Her ladyship may have seen and fancied you when we marched through Pundrapore last relief time, and have hocused the G.-G. into sending you to console her for the loss of that puppy Grantley."

Jones blushed, and the mess set up a roar of laughter, as they were in duty bound to do, at this witticism of the colonel's, while M'Gonnigil, the senior captain and chief Adonis of the regiment, who would himself have gladly accepted the responsibilities of the Pundrapore Residency, not excluding the Begum, threw a contemptuous glance across the table, and muttered, "The devil rescue her oisight if she did."

Captain Jones arrived in Calcutta, and put up at Spence's, where he soon found that the Resident of Pundrapore was a very different personage from the young cadet who had lived there upon a hundred rupees a-month twelve years before. *Khidmutghars* flew to anticipate his orders, *punkah-wallahs* pulled as if for life or death whenever he came into their vicinity, and even the manager of the hotel—great man as he was—bowed with an appearance of politeness when Captain Jones ap-

peared in the breakfast room of a morning. At the club in Chowringhee, every one who had the slightest acquaintance with him asked him to dinner, and people whose names were scarcely known to him offered him their carriages for a drive on the course. So much for being a political officer on fifteen hundred a-month, thought Jones, as he blessed the hour when he had been gazetted to the Political Department. There was still one ordeal to be gone through: he must report himself at the Foreign Office, and receive his instructions; and he much feared the result, if Sir Rothie Murkus were to subject him to a cross-examination upon the duties of a Political Agent. He had read all the article "Pundrapore" in 'Thornton's Gazetteer,' and had attempted to commit to memory the six treaties which the British Government had made with the rulers of that State, none of which had ever been worth the parchment that bore the originals. And when he had mastered the Foreign Secretary's "Thoughts on the Duty of British Intervention in Native States," and the Under-Secretary's "Notes on Annexation," and the Deputy Under-Secretary's "Quousque Tandem: A Plea for the Deposition of Indian Despots," he thought he might venture into the lion's mouth, and he accordingly sought the sanctum of Sir Rothie Murkus.

As he passed through the Deputy Under-Secretary's room, that gentleman, who was engaged with the editor of the 'Bengal Peon,' abruptly broke off the conversation, and stared at Captain Jones as if his eyeballs would start from their sockets. In the next apartment,

where the Under-Secretary, a small young gentleman of weak eye-sight and bilious temperament, was similarly occupied with the editor of the 'John Bull,' he was honoured with an equal share of attention. Mr. Waspbite wiped his spectacles, put them on, and said, "God bless me! are you Captain Jones, the Pundrapore man?" And having received an affirmative bow, he again said, "God bless me!" and appeared quite struck by the circumstance. At the next door stood Sir Rothie himself, shaking hands with the editor of the 'Padrepore Monitor and Weekly Evangelist,' for the Foreign Office knew well the value of cultivating the Exeter Hall interest. Though Sir Rothie had more politeness than his subordinates, he too seemed to share in the general curiosity, and he subjected Captain Jones to a critical examination as he conducted him into his office.

"And so you're the new Resident of Pundrapore, are you, hey?" said Sir Rothie, as he seated himself at his desk; "I suppose you did not expect such promotion, eh?"

"I did not, sir; but I assure you I am very grateful for it," said Jones, modestly; "and I hope I shall prove to Government that its confidence has not been misplaced. May I ask to whom I am indebted for my good fortune?"

"Oh, to nobody in particular. The Government of Bengal always knows where to lay its fingers upon the right man. And now for your instructions—here they are. And Captain Jones, if I were you, I would follow Mr. Harcourt's advice as much as possible. He has been long in the Residency, and knows its ways. I shan't detain you longer; but stay, I think the Commander-in-Chief had something to

say to you. You know he has just returned from Pundrapore? Well, I'm going now to Government House, where we shall meet Sir George. You may as well come along with me."

Jones trembled at the recollection of the fatal day at Bustlepora, when his awkwardness had imperilled the portly paunch of the Commander-in-Chief, flashed across his mind; but duty compels the soldier up to the cannon's mouth, and Jones resigned himself with a sigh to the prospect of meeting Sir George Blitzen.

He was, however, spared the pain of an interview. The Commander-in-Chief had already entered his carriage, and was driving off as Sir Rothie and Captain Jones came into the compound. "Hey, Sir George, Sir George! this is Captain Jones, the new Resident of Pundrapore, whom you wished to see!" cried the Foreign Secretary; but the Chief's impatient horses would not be stayed. Sir George put his head out of the carriage and threw a penetrating glance in the direction of our hero. "All right," he cried; "I am off to Barrackpore to inspect the station. Ugly as ever, Springer," he muttered to his aide-de-camp; "he is just the man I wanted;" and his Excellency was whirled away, leaving Jones and Sir Rothie standing on the steps of Government House.

"It's all right, I suppose," said Sir Rothie; "if he had had anything particular to say to you I daresay he would have said it. I suppose he just wanted to congratulate you. Good-bye, Captain Jones. I hope you'll have a pleasant time of it. Take care and don't be fascinated by the Begum;" and Sir Rothie disappeared within the *penetralia* of Government House.

The Calcutta journals next morning had each a leader upon the Pundrapore Residency. The 'John

Bull' said that the time had come when the British public must demand, by its representatives, an impartial review of the exercise of the Governor-General's patronage. "When we see the public interest sacrificed to private considerations, and nameless and unknown men promoted to positions which they are perfectly unqualified to fill, it is the duty of a free and conscientious press to demand that the axe should be laid to the root of the tree, and that such abuses as we have recently seen in the case of the Pundrapore Residency, should be rendered impossible in the future. The claims of Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Robinson, Political Agent at the Court of Chotasahebpoore, are too conspicuous to require that public attention should be directed to the gross injustice which has been sustained by that gallant officer; but in another quarter the Government that has offered so flagrant an insult to a meritorious servant, and that has thus hurled defiance at public opinion, will infallibly be called to account." The 'Peon' was more mild, and expressed a doubtful hope that Captain Jones might prove equal to his responsible position; but feared that Mr. Rattle, the Commissioner of Saugor Island and the Lower Sunderbunds, was the only official who could have saved the Pundrapore State. "We have it upon excellent authority that Captain Jones's appointment has been made under pressure from the Home authorities, and that it has formed the subject of a dignified protest on the part of the Government of Bengal. How long, we ask, are the hands of our administrators to be paralysed by the ignorant and interested action of their English masters, the plutocracy of Leadenhall Street, the Octogenarians of Cannon Row?" The 'Padrepore

Monitor' said the others were all wrong, and that there were special reasons for Captain Jones's appointment—reasons which could not at the present moment be laid with propriety before the public; and so people began to think that Jones must be somebody after all, for the 'Padrepore Monitor' was supposed to have good information about what went on in the back staircases of Government House.

Captain Jones went away from Calcutta with his good opinion of his own capacity very much strengthened. He had come to look upon himself as an embryo Malcolm, and he dreamed already of missions to Persia and to Cabul, of the Foreign Secretaryship, and of a seat in Council, with perhaps the government of one of the minor Presidencies. Who knew? Such things had been, and his foot was now upon the first step of the ladder. At the *dak* bungalows on the road to Pundrapore he utilised the stoppages for the composition of a new series of epitaphs, in which he provided for all the possible contingencies of his future career, from the Pundrapore Residency to the government of Bombay. A statue in the cathedral of Calcutta, with an inscription, "To the Memory of Major-General Sir John Jones, Knight Commander of the Bath, of the Order of the Douranee Empire, of the Burmese Tsalway, &c. &c., Whose brilliant diplomatic talents, For so many years, Shed a lustre upon the Indian Service, And secured to the British Possessions Peace and Uninterrupted Security," occupied his mind during the most of the long and wearisome journey.

When he arrived at Pundrapore he found his predecessor already gone. So disgusted was Captain Grantley at Jones's appointment, that he did not take the trouble to make over the office to him in per-

son, but hurried off to Agra to have, as he said, "a fling" before settling down in the solitude of Kaifiabad. "Tell the fellow," he had said to Mr. Harcourt, "that he will find it not quite so easy to keep the peace in Pundrapore as to smoke cheroots at the mess-table of the Jungly-wallahs. The Government has taken away the only man who could have held down disturbances, and the consequences be at its own door. Good-bye, Harcourt, and God send you a good deliverance from Pundrapore; for if I know anything about the place, there will soon be mischief with this new booby." Mr. Harcourt thought so too, and he had put in for a transfer from the Political to the Administrative Department so soon as he had heard of Captain Jones's appointment. But he received his new superior with formal civility, and did his best to instruct him in the duties of the office, although his surprise at the Government's selection continued to increase as he found opportunities for gauging Captain Jones's mental abilities.

The curiosity regarding the new Resident had extended even to Pundrapore. Rumour, which is always distorted in native gossip, had described the new Resident as little better than a *pagul* or fool. Fools, they said, were always fortunate, and the Big Lord Sahib had read in the stars that Pundrapore would be given over to the British by the greatest fool in the army; and so Captain Jones had been selected. If the Begum did not share in the general belief, she at least shared in the general curiosity, and waited with much anxiety for the arrival of the new Political, whose mysterious appointment she could not but think boded no good to the continuance of her authority. At this time her Highness was more

than ever immersed in political intrigue. There were daily reports of a rising in Lahore, and the Begum was only waiting for the Sikhs to take the field to proclaim the independence of Pundrapore, to massacre the English in the Residency, and to declare herself sole ruler of the State during the rest of her life. The great obstacle to the Begum's scheme was Taptee Rao, the minister of her late husband, who still nominally held the office of Vizier, although he did not share in the councils of his mistress. Taptee was a shrewd old Brahmin, who had sense enough to be faithful to the British and to the cause of the youthful Nawab. The many slights which the Begum had heaped upon him, and the contempt with which his advice was always treated, had sunk deep in Taptee's heart, and he was eager to thwart her ambitious designs, and to reveal her plots to the Foreign Office. But the Begum conducted all her intrigues through her favourite, Faizul Khan, a wily and truculent Patan who commanded the Pundrapore troops, and whose detestation of the pork-eating English and dogs of Hindoos had raised him high in the good graces of the Regent. Faizul, it was said, even aspired to share the Pundrapore *munad*, if the Begum were once at liberty; and it is certain that he looked with no favourable eyes upon her intimacy with Captain Grantley. The Begum had a difficult task to conciliate her two admirers, but she managed to make tools of them both, and sneered at both alike when their backs were turned.

A grand durbar was held for the reception of the new Resident, shortly after Captain Jones's arrival. It was with no little trepidation that Jones prepared himself for the ceremony. He had never been a Mæcenas to military tailors, but

his position now demanded that some attention should be paid to costume, and a number of boxes from Harman's had accompanied him to Pundrapore. When he had equipped himself in full diplomatic uniform, he stood waiting for Mr. Harcourt, nervously handling his cocked-hat, and wishing that the durbar was well over. Harcourt came in smoking a cigar, and looking provokingly cool. "Hilloa!" he cried; "going to tame the Pundrapore tigress by love and the language of flowers, instead of Sir Rothie's despatches. I declare it's quite refreshing to see a new Calcutta coat, if it didn't awaken painful reminiscences of unpaid bills. Well, shall we go and make our salaams to the Begum? It's a deuced nuisance in such a hot morning; and I hope we shall get away as soon as possible."

"Well, really, I suppose we must get it over," doubtfully replied the martyr to the mysterious policy of Government; "but you see, the fact is, that I'm somewhat new to this kind of work. I never was but at one levee in my life"—and here the ill-omened recollection of his rencontre with Sir George Blitzen darted across his memory—"I'm rather afraid—that is, I'm anxious—that—well, yes, that the dignity of the British Government should be properly represented upon this important occasion."

Jones looked towards his subordinate with much solemnity, as if he would have Mr. Harcourt believe that his mind was troubled with official responsibility, and not with a nervous dread of appearing in public. But Harcourt was too astute a diplomatist to be thus imposed upon.

"Ah, yes, I see," he said, casting a keen glance at the Resident. "Well, all you have got to do is to look wise and ill-natured, and follow

my directions: to be coldly complaisant to the Begum, to be particularly civil and gracious to old Taptee Rao, and to put on as sulky a frown as you can whenever you look in the direction of that confounded *soor* Faizul Khan."

"I suppose I had better do something, too, about seeing the boy Nawab. Sir Rothie, in his instructions, lays special emphasis upon 'guarding against the injurious results of maternal fondness and female indulgence.' The child, of course, will be thoroughly spoiled by his doting mother."

"Ah, well, perhaps," rejoined Mr. Harcourt, doubtfully. "Has it never occurred to you, Captain Jones, that by 'the injurious results of maternal fondness' Sir Rothie may have meant such mistakes as giving the child poison for sweetmeats, or wringing his neck round when playing with him in her arms? Of course you understand your own instructions better than I do, but I have known such *double entendres* often conveyed under cover of a diplomatic phrase."

"Good heavens! you are surely not in earnest, Harcourt?" cried the astonished Resident. "The Begum surely cannot be such a fiend as harm her own flesh and blood."

"You see there is flesh and blood and flesh and blood, and the Begum cares so much for the flesh and blood that is contained within her own pretty epidermis, that she has but little affection to bestow upon external animal matter," said Mr. Harcourt, deliberately, as he lazily puffed forth smoke. "The child is in her way, and if it were not for the Government she would throttle the poor *chhokra* with as little reluctance as she would order that big brute, Faizul Khan, to knock you and me both upon the

head. However, let her do her worst, and I am very much mistaken if she do not find that F. O. trumps her tricks for her."

The two set out together for the durbar, Captain Jones's equanimity being by no means restored by Mr. Harcourt's communications. The Resident looked admiringly at his companion, envying him his coolness; and indeed Mr. Harcourt would not have been put about if he had entered the presence of the Great Mogul in the palmiest days of the Delhi empire. He sucked at his cigar until he was at the very door of the palace, where they were received with great ceremony by Taptee Rao and Faizul Khan, who marshalled them to the durbar room. Here the Begum, a shapeless mass of silks and embroidery, showing neither features nor figure, was crouching upon a mass of velvet cushions. The officers made their salaams and took their seats, while the Residency *Munshi* read over Captain Jones's credentials in Persian for the edification of the Princess. Harcourt, who was used to Oriental fashions, squatted cosily among his cushions, and began to stare nonchalantly about him. Poor Jones, who had never sat upon anything but a chair or a regimental saddle, had much ado to arrange his long legs in a position at once easy and dignified; and he shifted about painfully all the time the *Munshi* was drawing over the dispatch. Faizul Khan marked his awkwardness, and a sneer which he scarcely took pains to conceal crossed his haughty face. But it did not escape the Resident, whose eyes were wandering uneasily about the room; and remembering Harcourt's advice, he looked at Faizul Khan with a steady scowl which evidently discomposed the Pundrapore commandant. Tap-

tee Rao saw this byplay, and enjoyed the discomfiture of his rival, making a mental resolution to turn the incident to account.

At the conclusion of the *Munshi*'s prelection, Captain Jones, by Mr. Harcourt's direction, placed a *nuzzar*, or present of a few gold coins, in the Begum's hand, who muttered something in Persian of her respect for the British Government, and her happiness to receive the distinguished Sahib who had been sent to shed light upon her court by his presence. The Resident read a few sentences in Persian from a paper which Mr. Harcourt's forethought had caused to be pinned to the inside of his cocked-hat, assuring the Princess of the friendship of Government, and guaranteeing the liberties and independence of Pundrapore. The ceremony was then virtually at an end, as the attendants served the company with *attar* and *pan*; and then ensued that awkward pause which always precedes the end of an Indian visit. Captain Jones waited for the Begum's permission to go, and the Begum was on thorns until Captain Jones would take his departure. At last Harcourt's winks and nods admonished his chief to break up the meeting, and he asked her Highness's permission to depart, which was graciously granted. The mass of silks then moved from the room, and the two officers took their departure, attended by old Taptee Rao, who was all bows and smiles for the new Resident, whose arrival, he declared, "was welcome as a rain cloud in the thirsty month of Jeth."

"*Anglicè*, welcome as a wet blanket," muttered Harcourt, *sotto voce*; adding aloud, "Here comes that amiable individual, Faizul Khan, doing his visage the gross injustice of trying to make it look agreeable and benevolent; what:

can be in the wind now? 'O grand-mamma, what great eyes you have got!' 'The better to see you, my sweet little pet.' Upon which of us little Red Riding Hoods would the wolf like to sup?"

Faizul Khan heard the conclusion of Mr. Harcourt's remarks without understanding them in the least, although he was well acquainted with English. "Captain Sahib," he said, "her Highness has sent me to beg that you will allow her to present to your Honour her child, the young Nawab. Her Highness awaits you in the *Devan-i-khas* of the palace."

The *Devan-i-khas*, or public drawing-room, was a large bare-looking apartment. Its furniture presented a curious mixture of European civilisation with Oriental barbarism. Veneered cane-bottomed chairs stood side by side with rich velvet couches. The walls were hung with tawdry Parisian prints of questionable delicacy, interspersed with the weapons which the late Nawab had borne when he rode with Holkar and Ameer Khan; and the floor was bare, with the exception of a patch in the middle covered by a rich Persian carpet of gaudy colours. Captain Jones had never set his foot in a Begum's drawing-room before, and he stood wondering at the curious pictures and the strange furniture, until he heard a rustle behind him, and the Begum entered carrying her son in her arms. Her figure, no longer concealed beneath a mass of drapery, was shown to its full advantage by the simple white robe wound gracefully round her body; and a *chudder*, or mantle of airy muslin—called "running water"—from the fineness of its texture—was thrown carelessly over her head and shoulders, its spotless whiteness setting off the raven lustre of her luxuriant hair. Her face was fair—

singularly fair for an Oriental; her features were small and delicately chiselled; and her eyes, the chief criterion of a native beauty, were large, lustrous, fawn-like, and shaded by exquisitely-pencilled lashes. The little head was proudly carried upon a lithe and shapely neck, and her hands were tiny and of delicate whiteness. The little Nawab had taken after his father rather than his beautiful mother, for his face was black and swarthy, and his neck thick as that of a bull-calf. Captain Jones stood rapt in admiration of the Princess, and wondering how it was possible that so fair a creature could be as ruthless as Harcourt had represented her. Before he could acknowledge her presence, even by a bow, the Begum had thrown herself at the feet of the astonished officer, and held up her hands in an attitude of pathetic supplication.

"Oh Sahib!" she cried, "Allah has indeed been good to Pundrapore in sending you here to protect me and my helpless child. I have heard so much of your honour and valour that we can sleep sound under your protection. Graciously accept me and my son as the humblest of your slaves."

The Princess spoke English well; probably her intercourse with Captain Grantley had aided her to acquire this somewhat unusual branch of an Eastern lady's education.

"Madam, I mean your Highness, I cannot bear to see you in this posture," stammered Jones, who devoutly wished that he had brought Harcourt with him; "I entreat you to rise and be seated. You may ever command my services in anything that relates to yourself or your territories, so far as consists with my duty to Government."

He took the Begum's hand and led her to a seat. "How fortunate

I am, Captain Sahib, in having you sent here to aid me, a poor weak woman, in ruling this troublesome country!" said the Begum, turning her eyes full upon Jones with a look of soft blandishment. "Lord Blitzen Sahib, when at Pundrapore, said that your bravery was like that of Jamshid, and your justice renowned as King Naushirvan's."

"The devil he did," thought Jones. "It was very good of Sir George to say so, but how on earth could he have known it? He must have watched my career very closely to have such an intimate knowledge of me."

"I have many enemies, Sahib," continued the Begum. "They wish to take away the *munud* from me and my son, and they tell lies of us to the Lord Sahib at Calcutta. How can I, a helpless widow, stand up against the words of the *Sahib log* (Englishmen)? But you will assist me; say that you will assist me! Oh protector of the poor, lay your hand upon the child's head and be a father to him!"

Captain Jones, though much disconcerted by the idea of so close a relationship, did as he was requested, and promised that he would do his best to remove any misunderstanding between her Highness and the Government. The beauty and apparent helplessness of the Begum were making a considerable impression upon Jones's heart, and he mentally vowed that he would be her devoted knight and champion.

"You will not heed what Harcourt Sahib may say to you. He is deceived by Taptee Rao, my late lord's wicked minister, who hates me, and has sworn to take my life. He wishes to be regent himself. But now I may rely upon your honour and defy him."

Jones again assured her Highness of his disposition to assist her; and

begging permission to take his leave, he bowed himself out of the room, the Princess saluting him with profound salaams, and casting tender glances after him so long as he was in sight. Scarcely had the doors closed after the Resident, when the Begum sprang to her feet, set down the child upon the floor with a bump that made him squall lustily, and ran to the window overlooking the countryyard, where Captain Jones was already getting on horseback.

"Why have they sent that father of asses here?" she muttered in her native language, her little hands passionately clenched, and her eyes sparkling with rage. "Can the English Sircar have meant to throw dirt upon me by sending an unknown fool to reside at my court? Well, well, upon their own heads be the issue. I shall turn their insult to my own advantage, and *when the time comes* they will miss Jones Sahib less than a better officer." A smile of diabolical significance passed over the Begum's face as she said this, which boded no good to the officer who had just ridden out of the palace courtyard.

"It is utterly impossible that so lovely a woman can be so bad as they call her," soliloquised Jones, as he rode through the bazaar towards the Residency. "Harcourt must be mistaken, and I should not be surprised if that old villain Taptee Rao was at the bottom of all the slanders that have been raised upon her Highness; however, he won't deceive me. Who on earth could have believed that old Blitzen would have given me such a good character to the Begum? Though rough and *brusque* in his manners, Sir George is an officer of great penetration—of remarkable penetration, in fact—and he knows the service from head to tail, else he could not have known that I was the right man for Pun-

drapore. I think I ought to write and thank him for his good opinion."

And Captain Jones did write a most grateful letter to Sir George Blitzen, in which he returned his humble thanks for the favourable opinion his Excellency had expressed of him to the Begum, and concluded by saying that he should ever strive to perform his duty so as to merit the continuance of his Excellency's approbation.

Sir George read this epistle with a puzzled look, and then after a minute's reflection burst forth into a prolonged whistle. "See here,

Springer!" he cried, tossing over the letter to his secretary. "The infernal jade has got that damned booby in her toils already. I never said a word about him. However, it's all right. Just give a hint to the Quartermaster-General to see that the Pundrapore routes are correctly laid down in the road-book, for if troops aren't wanted there before the *chota bursat* (early rains), my name isn't George Blitzen." And the gallant warrior expressed his satisfaction at the posture of affairs by a volley of oaths which need not be reproduced here.

III.

Sir George Blitzen proved, however, a false prophet, for time passed on and no disturbance occurred in the Pundrapore territories. No event had yet transpired to put the Resident upon his mettle, and, fortunately for himself, his intercourse with the Begum had not passed the bounds of diplomatic routine. Her Highness professed the utmost respect for Captain Jones's opinion, and consulted him upon everything in which she was *not* seriously interested. Jones soon began to take great credit to himself for the change he had produced in the Begum, and to boast that by a little judicious diplomacy he had transformed Pundrapore from a hotbed of sedition into one of the most loyal States in India.

"Wait a bit," said Harcourt; "don't halloo until you're out of the jungle. I like this quietness worse than her old tantrums. Although I don't see her cards, I'll give you twenty to one in gold mohurs that she is up to some precious deep mischief all this time. It's a pity that you aren't friends with Taptee Rao nowadays, for he is the man that

would be most likely to give us a tip upon the event."

But even Mr. Harcourt's scepticism was somewhat staggered when the Begum one day placed in the hands of the Resident a proposal which had been made to her by the Rajah of Thagabad, a petty princeling whose lands abutted on the Pundrapore territory. The Rajah had offered his services to the Pundrapore State in case of a rising against the British, and pledged himself to bring five hundred men to the Begum's banner, provided a grant of lands which his family had formerly enjoyed in her Highness's territory were again confirmed to him. It was, after all, a cheap demonstration of loyalty upon the Begum's part, for she knew well that the Rajah could not put fifty men in the field. She had not forgotten, either, that in a recent dispute about the marches, the Rajah had designated her by a name unpleasant to the ears of women; and lastly, she held at that very moment, under the signature and seal of the Lion of the Punjab, a grant of the Rajah's own lands and principality. So the Ra-

jah was relieved of the care of his property, and requested to reside in the holy city of Benares, while the Begum received a letter of thanks for her loyalty written by the Governor-General's own hand. Her Highness gave a malicious little laugh as she crumpled up his lordship's letter, and read the punishment which had befallen her enemy of Thagabad; but she professed herself to Captain Jones to be overjoyed beyond measure at the honour which his Excellency had done her.

Captain Jones sat upon his verandah on a hot September evening, smoking a cheroot and reading a Calcutta newspaper. Harcourt was away upon privilege leave, playing havoc among tigers in Dehra Dhoon, or flirting with the languid belles of Landour and Mussoorie. There was not much news in the Calcutta journal. He read of a horrid murder in Lall Bazaar, and how the police had failed to find the perpetrator. There was a column and a half of a lecture upon "Female Education" by Baboo Bunkum Chunder Chintamony, whose own wives and daughters could not have read their *ka kha, ga gha* (the Bengalee alphabet), to have saved them from the burning ghat. And there was another address upon "Pure Theism, the only True Religion," delivered before the Cossitollah Literary Association by Baboo Jotendro Churn Chatterjee, who, a few days before, had given a thousand rupees to buy new ornaments for the family idol at Guddhapore. There was, of course, an account of another squabble among the justices, in which Commissioner Bacon, the chairman, had received the lie direct from Mr. Benediction Williams, and had retorted by calling his opponent "a beggar on horseback;" but it had with some difficulty been adjusted without the intervention of fisticuffs. This was no novelty, and

Jones turned languidly away to the editorial columns, where a leader announced that the Punjab was in a state bordering upon insurrection, and called upon the Government to take immediate steps for insuring the safety of the country.

It was too true. The old Lion of Lahore had been gathered to his fathers, and his sons and grandson, who inherited neither his valour nor his prudence, rapidly followed him; until the sceptre of the Khalsa came at last into the boyish hands of Dhuleep Singh, the last prince of the Punjab. His mother, who now became the animating spirit of the Lahore Court, entertained a bitter hatred towards the British; and she was at this time the centre of a widely-spread conspiracy, which had for its object the expulsion of the English forces from at least the upper provinces of Hindostan. Of this conspiracy the Pundrapore Begum was a most active member, and constant communication was kept up between the two durbars. And upon this very evening, while Captain Jones was quietly smoking his cheroot, her Highness was reading the following missive, which a Sikh soldier, disguised as a mendicant, had just brought her:—

"To the beautiful among women, excelling in wisdom, and of manlike courage, Murwarid, Begum of Pundrapore,—Receive our wishes for your prosperity, and know that all our preparations are made for crossing the river, and the thirst of the Khalsa can only be sloked by a deep draught of English blood. You are entreated, when this reaches you, to take the field. What need of more? Prayers for the prosperity of the reign. The communication of the lowly slave, Gulloo, Maharanee of Lahore."

The Begum well knew the meaning of this missive, which was writ-

ten in a cipher intelligible only to the conspirators. All their plans had been arranged beforehand, and now the signal of insurrection was given. Impatient as the Begum had been for revolt, she felt a hesitation to engage with the paramount power now that the time had arrived, and an ominous distrust of the issue. But it was too late to draw back. Lall Singh was by this time advancing upon the Sutledge, and the success of his forces must depend in a great measure upon her co-operation.

The Begum was for many hours closeted with Faizul Khan and a few of the most trusted officers of the Court. In a short time messengers were getting to horse, and galloping over the territory, commanding the attendance of all the Mohammedan chieftains, with their vassals. There was a considerable force always kept under arms within the State, upon pretence that troops were necessary to repress the haughty Rajpoot landholders, who could but ill brook Mussulman rule. Of this force both the Resident and Government were perfectly aware; but beyond keeping a keen eye upon its movements they did not interfere further. A small British force was stationed at Malariabad, near the Pundrapore frontier, where such of the officers as were not suffering from the climate of that salubrious station dispensed a lavish hospitality, and organised monster sporting excursions into the thick Pundrapore jungles; and over the movements of the Malariabad garrison the Resident had a discretionary power, should circumstances render their services necessary to him.

Captain Jones had despatched his dinner, and was sitting with open jacket and unbuckled waist-belt over a cheroot and a glass of iced brandy-and-soda, when a mes-

sage was brought from the Begum, begging his instant attendance, upon a matter of importance. "What on earth does she want, I wonder?" growled Jones, reluctantly fastening his belt, and taking up his helmet and sword; "nothing that wouldn't have kept until to-morrow, I fancy. Perhaps the little Nawab has got a colic from eating too many mangoes; or some zemindar has refused to pay his rent, and the Begum wants my sanction to send a lot of troopers to recover the arrears. Wonderfully simple and beautiful is the law of distraint here in Pundrapore."

And so Jones, attended only by a single orderly, walked briskly to the palace, and was shown up into a room that had been the *duftur khana*, or business-room of the late Nawab. The Begum had not yet made her appearance, but the little Prince, who had taken a great fancy for Jones, came running into the room and clasped him by the knees.

"*Tulwar do hum ko, Capitan Sahib*" (Give me your sword, Captain), cried the child; and the boy was soon astride of the Captain's long cavalry sword, and galloping wildly about the room.

While Jones stood watching the child's gambols, Faizul Khan, with half-a-dozen Patan troopers, came suddenly behind, and threw themselves upon him. An unequal struggle took place, and in a few minutes the Resident was lying on the ground, bound hand and foot, while Faizul Khan stood over him, with a drawn sabre pointed at his breast, threatening to slay him if he uttered a single word.

"*Mat maro Capitan Sahib, mat maro!*" (Don't beat the Captain, don't beat him), cried the little Nawab, as, with tears in his eyes, he dragged the Resident's sword towards Faizul Khan, and endeav-

oured to strike down the Patan's sabre.

"Take away the boy," cried Faizul Khan, hoarsely, "and secure the doors and windows. Place a sentry at each door, and let them stab the prisoner if he speaks above his breath. Make ready my horse there," he cried, as he clanked out of the room.

Jones was now left alone, lying upon the floor, and the doors were locked upon the outside. He was stupefied by the turn affairs had taken, and his mind was perfectly unable to suggest any cause for the attack which had just been made upon him. Two things were, however, apparent: that his life was in serious danger, and that there was a political disturbance about to take place. But the Begum! what of her? Had he been seized by her consent, or was Faizul Khan the leader of the insurrection, and the Princess herself also a prisoner? So sudden had been the outbreak that he could scarcely convince himself of its reality. It must be the aged and indigestible fowl that he had eaten at dinner three-quarters of an hour before, or the cheroots, or the brandy-pawnee; and it would all pass away in a headache to-morrow morning. But no; the cords on his wrists and ankles were no nightmare phantasm, and the hard floor beneath him was a sensible reality. Brief time had, however, been given him to meditate upon his situation when the Begum hastily entered the room, attended by two armed Sirdars. Her Highness seemed to have undergone a complete transformation since Jones had last seen her. She was no longer the meek and humble widow, who had boasted of her helplessness, and had been too timorous to do anything upon her own responsibility without consulting the Resi-

dent. Her delicate features, distorted by passion, and her flashing eyes, now showed how well she merited the title of Tigress of Pundrapore. She carried a naked dagger in one hand, and a sheet of paper in the other.

"You are in my power, Captain Sahib," she said coldly; "listen now to what I have to say. In a few weeks the chiefs and princes of Hindostan will have beaten the British beyond the Carumnassa, and not an Englishman will be left in the upper provinces except as a prisoner. I might kill you just now, but I prefer to spare you; that is, provided you will purchase your life by obeying my commands."

"My life is in your hands, and you may do with it as you please," said Jones, raising himself on his elbow, and looking the Begum boldly in the face; "but never will I consent to purchase it at the expense of either duty or honour. I warn your highness of the dangerous game you are playing—a game that can only end in the destruction of yourself and your principality; for the British power is like the ten heads of your demon Ravuna, which grow on again as fast as they are cut off."

"I came not here to ask your advice," said the Begum, haughtily, "but to give you my orders. Here is paper; on that table are pens and ink. Write to the commandant Sahib at Malariabad to draw off his troops to Agra, to join the division there which is about to march to the Punjab to repel the Sikhs. Do this, and I swear by the Koran that your life shall be safe. Refuse, and you die before midnight."

"Never," said poor Jones, with a groan: "do your worst, but I'll never disgrace my commission by such an act."

"Slave!" cried the Begum in a fury as she flashed the dagger above her head, "shall I have to torture you into obedience? I know not what prevents me from plunging this into your heart. Hearken, Jones Sahib; it is your last chance. I give you half an hour to consider; and if you refuse on my return, I shall put you to death with such tortures as never Englishman yet suffered. Think well what awaits you before you make up your mind."

So the Begum and her attendants left the room, leaving Jones again to his solitary thoughts. They were far from pleasant. Death stared him in the face, for he would never save himself by complying with the Begum's commands. Though by no means possessed of a vigorous intellect, Jones had plenty of courage, and would have scorned to disgrace the British service. He tried to think seriously of his latter end, but his thoughts strayed to the Begum, to the rebellion in the Punjab, to what they would say at Government House when they heard of his murder, and to a hundred other subjects wholly irrelevant to the dread change that was approaching. He began a prayer, but long before he had got to the end of it, he found himself at his old occupation of epitaph-making, composing an inscription for a memorial which Government would erect over his slaughtered remains. He felt he could almost die in peace if he might leave behind him a suitable design for a monument; but, alas! his wrists were tied, and the hour of his death was at hand. He rolled over upon his other side, and again attempted to compose himself for prayer. "Hist, Sahib," was whispered close beside him; and rolling round again, Jones saw by the light of the lamp that swung from the ceiling, the round bald head and

smooth puffy cheeks of old Taptee Rao protruding from the floor; "write, Sahib, write, and trust to Taptee. I faithful slave of Company Bahadoor. I shall save the resident Sahib, and turn the plots of the Begum *ulta putta* (upside down). She very clever woman the Begum, but Taptee Rao very more clever. Write, Sahib, and give me your seal-ring."

"Can I trust him?" thought Jones; "or is this a new artifice of the Begum's? She hates him, and he has as much to fear as I have. It is a forlorn-hope to grasp at it."

"Quick, Sahib, quick! Begum come back directly. Give me ring, and I send for Sepoys to Malariabad. I offer reward to all who desert the Begum, and I surround the palace before daybreak, and take the Begum prisoner. May dogs devour her!" added Taptee, revenge lighting up his generally stolid countenance. Jones could only reply by rolling round, and turning his back, behind which his hands were bound, towards Taptee. The minister slipped off the ring, and said, "Do as Begum bids you, Sahib; make believe to write. I tell the commandant Sahib all beforehand. I come back directly; they not hurt a hair of your head, Sahib." And Taptee disappeared with a reassuring wink towards the Resident. Five minutes after, two horsemen had started for Malariabad, a distance of five-and-twenty miles, carrying intelligence of the rebellion, and commanding the instant despatch of a force to Pundrapore.

When the Begum returned, she found Jones sulkily resigned to her wishes. "Will you write, Jones Sahib?" she cried, with a menacing flourish of her dagger; "or will you try the fare which the Begum of Pundrapore has prepared for her English guest?"

"I take these men to witness," said Jones in Hindustanee, avoiding a direct answer, "that I act under compulsion and against my own free will."

A contemptuous smile curled the Begum's lips. "It is well," she said; "life is sweet. Loose his hands and give him the pen and ink; and if he dares to make the slightest struggle, stab him to the heart."

Jones, with a sheet of paper upon his knee, wrote a formal order to the colonel commanding at Malariabad, directing him to join his division at Agra with all the garrison, in consequence of an outbreak in the Punjab, of which he, the Resident, had just received information from Government. When he had finished, the Begum took the letter and narrowly examined it, as if she would convince herself that no private communication had been conveyed under cover of the official message.

"Good, Sahib," she said; "for the present your life is spared, but if within two hours after he receives this the commandant Sahib does not march for Agra, I shall have you blown from the biggest gun in Pundrapore."

The attendants again bound Jones's hands and left him, securing the doors and placing sentries on the outside as before. "After all, then, it is only a brief reprieve," thought Jones, "for she will of course come down on me as soon as she hears that the troops are marching to attack her. Heavens! what a booby I have been to allow myself to be deceived by that woman."

Jones lay keeping his eyes anxiously fixed upon the spot where Taptee Rao had formerly appeared. A vision of angels or cherubim would have been less welcome at that moment than Taptee's bullet-head. He had not long to wait.

A piece of matting began to heave, a portion of the floor was cautiously raised, and Taptee peered warily into the room.

"All right, Sahib," he whispered; "soldiers come directly, and I send for Doorga Singh with three hundred horsemen, all Hindoos who faithful to Company's salt. Malariabad sepoys be here before morning, and then the Begum's *raj* is done, gone, finished."

Nothing but the close proximity of the sentries, and their critical position, could have prevented Taptee from relieving his exuberant feelings by a triumphant dance over the approaching downfall of his enemy. He drew himself up through the aperture, and, taking a knife from his girdle, severed the cords that confined the Resident. "You must go from palace, Sahib," he said; "go along Malariabad road, and stay in old pagoda till I come." Jones went first through the trap-door into the room beneath, and Taptee followed, carefully arranging the flooring and mats so that the secret of the Resident's escape might remain a mystery. They found themselves in Taptee's private room, and the trap-door may perhaps serve to explain the extraordinary acquaintance which the minister possessed with all his late master's secrets.

Taptee gave Jones a sabre and pistols, and letting him out by a private gate, directed him to the pagoda where the Resident was to wait for his arrival.

A grand council had been summoned for one o'clock in the palace hall, in which the Begum was to declare her intention of joining the Sikhs, and the nobles were to proclaim her sole ruler of Pundrapore during her lifetime. Her Highness had been closeted with Faizul Khan and other sirdars, devising ways and means for equipping a large force

which was to be instantly despatched to the Lahore army. The point of greatest importance that still remained to be settled was the fidelity of Taptee Rao. Faizul Khan, who wanted his place, volunteered to murder him without further delay; but the Begum knew the influence which the minister possessed among the Hindoo chiefs and Brahmins of Pundrapore, and resolved if possible to obtain his assistance. Taptee entered the hall where several chiefs were already assembled, with a face of smiling innocence, making careless inquiries why the council had been summoned. His jocular manner formed a singular contrast to the anxious and restless demeanour of the other councillors, who stared aghast at Taptee's reckless appearance, and turned away impatiently from his broad jokes. At last the Begum entered the hall, attended by Faizul Khan and half-a-score of Sirdars. Without preface her Highness explained the state of affairs, and eloquently urged the nobles to take up arms for their country and for religion. She had, she said, at the earnest request of her subjects, consented to rule over them so long as she lived; and she now begged the council to show its confidence by committing to her the sole direction of the expedition which was to be sent to the Punjab. Loud cries of "*Din! din!*" (for the Faith, for the Faith) showed that the enthusiasm of the Mohammedan chiefs had been aroused; and the Begum, smiling graciously, continued, "But first we must know who are our friends and who our foes. Taptee Rao, you have heard our proposals; will you, who have eaten our bread and our salt, turn against your rightful ruler and take part with the infidel English against your country?"

"Gracious Queen!" said Taptee,

sidling forward with a bland visage, "Asylum of the Universe and Protector of the Poor, if my humble services can in any wise be acceptable, deign to cast thine august eyes with favour upon the humblest of thy slaves."

"I commend your fidelity," said the Begum. "Retain your present post in our court, and when the British are driven from the country, we shall find some means of rewarding you!"

Taptee clasped his hands in an ecstasy of gratitude. "Most mighty sovereign," he said, "if your slave might be permitted to speak, he would say that in three hours he will bring his kinsman, Doorga Singh, with three hundred troopers, to your Highness's standard."

The Begum uttered an exclamation of joy. Doorga Singh was a haughty Hindoo noble with whom she had been long at feud, and she had never dared to expect assistance from him.

"Taptee Rao," she cried, "the *raj* of Thagabad is yours from this day, for the Lahore durbar has gifted it to me. Continue as you have begun, and your reward shall be great beyond your conception."

Faizul Khan ground his teeth and muttered an oath, while Taptee again prostrated himself before the Begum, overpowered by his grateful feelings. The wily Princess had not abated any of her hatred to the minister, but she knew how important it was at so critical a period to appear generous and conciliatory to her Hindoo subjects. Taptee begged her Highness to allow him to depart for a space that he might send the necessary instructions to his kinsman, Doorga Singh; and he waddled out of the room, pausing every second to invoke a blessing upon the head of his benefactress, and a prayer for the prosperity of her reign.

As soon as he quitted the hall, Taptee hurried off to his room, and hastily concealing a small bag of precious stones beneath his clothes, and catching up a sword, he hurried off to the old pagoda to join the Resident. He found Captain Jones pacing up and down the ruins in a fever of anxiety. Every few minutes the stillness was broken by the clatter of hoofs, as messengers dashed off with intelligence of the revolt. What delayed the troops from Malariabad? surely they ought to have been here before this time. But Malariabad was a good five-and-twenty miles off, and Taptee Rao's messenger would have little more than reached the cantonments. He felt relieved when Taptee joined him, and the two waited in the ruins, looking out anxiously towards the palace, where lights flitting about from window to window told of the bustle that was going on inside.

The council was not yet broken up. The Begum, assisted by Faizul Khan, received from the various chiefs the strength of the forces they could bring to the Pundrapore standard, and by bribes and lavish promises settled rival claims to command. Still no troops had arrived, and her Highness ever cast an anxious look towards the door for the return of Taptee Rao and his promised auxiliaries. The Begum started as she noticed a Sikh sowar, his dust-coloured uniform bespattered with mud, and his blue turban torn by riding through the jungles, make his way into the hall, and with little ceremony elbow a road through the excited crowd of Mohammedan chiefs, who were boasting loudly of the feats which they were to perform in the coming campaign. With a rough salaam he handed a note to the Begum and fell back among the throng.

The note ran thus, after the usual compliments :—

"The Sirdar Juwahir Singh, our trusted vizier, has been slain by traitors before our eyes. The 'drum of religion' is for the present silenced. You are entreated to take no steps until you hear further from us. May the hour of our deliverance be at hand.—GULLOO."

The Begum, as she read the letter, drew a long breath and looked down upon the scene before her. There they were, every one clamouring for battle; the nobles with drawn swords vaunting their bravery or disputing for precedence; Moulvies bustling about and stimulating the doubtful to war against the English *Kaffirs*; and there in a corner stood Faizul Khan, surrounded by a group of chiefs, with whose assistance he was laying down a plan of the morrow's march. And now the game was all up. She had cast the die, only to be beaten at the first throw. What was to be done? Should she at once tell the chiefs whom she had duped, and yield herself a victim to their fury, or wait rather until General Linstock came to carry her off as a prisoner to Benares or Chunar? Then there was the Resident—what was to be done with him? Should she give him his liberty, and make him an intercessor for her with the Governor-General, or slay him on the spot as an atonement to her baffled ambition? A thought struck her; why should not she escape to the Punjab with a few trusty followers, and take with her the Resident as an offering to the Sikh chiefs? He would at all events be useful as a hostage.

"Faizul Khan," she cried, "bring down the prisoner. I would learn from him the strength of the garrisons between this and Lahore."

Faizul Khan readily departed, delighted at the opportunity afforded

him of annoying his enemy Captain Jones. Scarcely had he left the hall when the tramp of a body of horse was heard, and attendants came running to announce the arrival of Doorga Singh and his troopers. The Begum's face became yet more ashy pale. "Fresh victims," she muttered; "but why should I regret them? they are only Hindoo dogs. Would that no blood of the Faithful may rest upon my head. Greet the leaders from us," she said aloud, "and invite them into our presence."

Doorga Singh came in, surrounded by a throng of Hindoo chieftains. He was a tall thin Mahratta, whose broad shoulders and long arms indicated great personal strength. He was armed with sword and shield, and bore the long Mahratta spear in his right hand. The Mohammedan chiefs twirled their mustaches, and looked with scarcely dissembled disgust upon the group of infidels as they pushed through the throng to the Begum's presence.

No reverence did Doorga Singh make to her Highness, and the Begum sat pale and almost shivering, waiting for an explanation of his strange demeanour; but before she could summon courage to speak, the Hindoos parted, and forward stepped the Resident with Taptee Rao hard at his heels.

"*Khiyānat, Khiyānat!*" ("Treachery, treachery!") shrieked the Begum, springing from her seat as the truth flashed upon her mind. "Faizul Khan, Abdul Ruhman, down with these Hindoo dogs! slay them for sons of burned fathers!"

"Hold!" cried Captain Jones before a man could stir, "your Highness is entirely in our hands, and resistance is useless. The palace is filled with Mahratta troopers, and a large British force is close to

the city. Resistance is worse than madness. Surrender, your Highness, and you, chiefs and sirdars, lay down your arms, and be assured that all possible leniency will be shown to your fault by Government."

Faizul Khan here came rushing in in alarm. "Asylum of the Universe," he cried, "the prisoner——" but seeing the aspect of affairs, he drew his sword and sprang upon the Resident. Doorga Singh received the Patan upon the point of his spear, and in an instant the wretched man lay writhing in the death-struggle at the foot of the *musnud*. A *mêlée* immediately ensued. Doorga Singh, shouting the Mahratta war-cry, "*Hur, hur Mahadeo!*" threw away his spear, and rushed sword in hand upon the Mohammedans. Mahrattas came crowding into the hall, and, wielding their long spears over the heads of the combatants, galled the Mussulmans, and made them an easy prey to those with whom they were engaged. The Resident stood by the Begum shouting to the Mahrattas to spare all who laid down their arms, but his words were unheeded in the heat of the conflict. In a few minutes the rebels were all overpowered or slain, and the Pundrapore rebellion was at an end. As for the Begum, she had tried to stab herself with her dagger, but Jones and Taptee had snatched it from her hand. She now sat looking upon the scene, like a tigress that has been disappointed in her prey. "Take me away, Captain Sahib; take me away," was all that she could utter, in a voice so husky as to be almost inaudible; and away she was led, Taptee taking care that her prison should be more secure than the one she had provided for the Resident.

Morning was beginning to glint

through the hall windows, revealing Jones upon the Pundrapore *musnud* refreshing himself with pale ale and cold pie which a servant had fetched from the Residency. By him squatted Taptee, who, regardless that the sacrilegious Sahib was eating the sacred flesh of kine, was holding an animated discussion with him on the future management of Pundrapore. At a respectful distance lay or squatted Doorga Singh and his officers, sleeping or smoking their *hookhas*; and close by them were the prisoners bound hand and foot, while the corpses of the slain were being carried from the hall. The noise of cavalry interrupted Taptee's confidences, and Colonel Beaton, of Beaton's Horse, the commandant of Malariabad, came rattling into the room.

"Why, damn it, Jones, you don't mean to say that it is all over?" cried he pettishly, as he looked round at the prisoners. "Couldn't you have kept them going until we came up? It's what I call doing the shabby thing to take fellows off their *charpoys* (beds) at one o'clock in the morning for nothing, and we

have nearly blown every horse in the regiment with the gallop."

Jones rapidly explained the events that had occurred during the night, and told Colonel Beaton that it might still be necessary to scour the state to suppress any chief that had taken arms by the Begum's orders.

"All right!" cried Beaton eagerly "we may have some sport yet. Let the men breathe their horses, Morris, and let them sound to saddle in an hour and a-half *tik* (exactly). I wonder if there is anything edible to be had here for *chota hazree* (early breakfast)? And I say, Jones, I'll tell you what I shall do for you. I'll leave you Penninck, who writes for the 'Peon.' He is a dab at doing reports, and will make up a beautiful story to tell the Government. Besides, the little beast has no more seat than a wool-pack, and would be always tumbling off if we came to any stiff riding."

And so when Colonel Beaton and his officers had done justice to a nondescript though plenteous meal, they galloped off to hunt for rebels, leaving Cornet Penninck on special duty at the Residency.

IV.

The Pundrapore insurrection caused a great sensation in Calcutta. Would Government annex the territory? Some said that Sir George Blitzen was already marching to Pundrapore at the head of two divisions of all arms of the service to depose the Begum and annex the state. Others were certain that the Governor-General would do nothing of the kind; that the present crisis demanded conciliatory measures; and that the Begum would be well "wiggled," and reinstated in the Regency. Mr. Waspbite, the Under-

Secretary at the Foreign Office, was besieged with inquiries at his club in Chowringhee, until even *his* amiable temper was exhausted, and he said, "Damn the Pundwapoah Wesidency. If you want to know you should ask the Govenah-General."

The press likewise had its say upon the subject. 'The Padrepore Monitor and Weekly Evangelist' reminded its readers how often in the course of the previous ten years it had constantly predicted that affairs at Pundrapore would turn

out exactly as they had happened. The editor conjured the Governor-General to do his duty and annex the principality, undeterred by the howls of native opinion, and regardless of the ignorant and interested views of English statesmen. "With an able English officer, such as Mr. Caird, the energetic Magistrate of Cholerapore, at the head of the administration, and an efficient educational staff under the Rev. Fungus M'Bain, the eminent Free Church Missionary, as Director of Public Instruction, upon a salary of not less than Rs.700 per mensem, with a free bungalow, a new and happier era would soon dawn upon the benighted regions of Pundrapore. The importance of the last-named appointment cannot be too strongly impressed upon his Excellency's consideration," &c., &c.

The 'Peon' scarcely expressed an opinion, but, as might have been expected, dwelt at length upon the valuable services which Cornet P. R. Penninck, of Beaton's Horse, had rendered in restoring order at the Residency and the Palace, an account of which occupied one and a-half columns of leaded type. The 'John Bull' bluntly said that the Government ought to do justice. "Visit with a fitting punishment the Begum and her fellow-conspirators, but why should an innocent child suffer for the misconduct of his guardian? Let us train the young Nawab to be a wise and judicious ruler, and place an experienced officer in charge of the state during his Highness's minority. In this manner we shall best refute the slanderous writers who would attribute to the Company's government an insatiable lust for territory. The name of Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Robinson, Political Agent of Chota-sahebpoore, must of course occur to every one who has bestowed a serious

thought upon the guardianship of the young Nawab and the future management of the Pundrapore state," &c., &c.

When the news of the Pundrapore insurrection reached Government House, a special meeting of the Executive Council was forthwith summoned. The members met in the evening in the old Council Chamber to determine the destiny of Pundrapore. If the *genius loci* could have prevailed, the independence of Pundrapore would have stood but a sober chance, for around them upon the walls hung the portraits of the statesmen and warriors who had done most to extend the British power in India. There was Clive, who gave Bengal, Behar, and Orissa to the Company's territories; Wellesley, the conqueror of Mysore, the Carnatic, the Maharashtra; with Hastings, Cornwallis, Eyre Coote, and Minto. But the golden age of annexation was past, and the pagoda-tree was fast falling into the sere and yellow leaf. There was a strong party in Parliament hostile to the Company, who never ceased to denounce each fresh extension of territory as another instance of arbitrary rapacity, seizing eagerly upon every new aggression as a ground for renewing the attack; and so the Calcutta statesmen were compelled to go cautiously to work in the case of Pundrapore.

"It appears to me, gentlemen," said the Governor-General during that little standing confabulation which always preceded the formal sitting, and in which the real business of the meeting was generally settled—"it appears to me that we have no real ground for proceeding to extremities against the state. The Nawab is but a child, and it would be hardly fair to make a minor answerable for the misdeeds of his guardian."

"All owing to that fellow Jones," growled the Honourable Mr. Elchey, who, having been Resident at the Court of Cooch Behar, claimed a leading voice in all diplomatic business. "If he had but kept out of the way and given them rope enough, the whole state would have been up, and then there would have been a good excuse for annexation. But the political department is going to the devil. When I was resident at Cooch Behar, your Excellency, there was an old Thakoor who had got a *ta' allukae zabardasti*, and the Government wanted——"

"But in this case, Mr. Elchey, I don't think any blame can attach to the Political officer," said the Governor-General, uncereemoniously interrupting the ex-diplomatist, whose reminiscences of Cooch Behar were notoriously prosy, and so full of Hindustani phrases as to be intelligible only to a member of the Revenue Board. "Captain Jones appears to have acted as judiciously as the circumstances admitted, and his report is really an admirably written document, quite different from anything that we have had before from Pundrapore. Besides we shall have the Punjab soon upon our hands, and can easily forego the pleasure, for the present, of gathering Pundrapore under the Company's wing."

"What was that mystery about Captain Jones's appointment, my Lord?" asked Mr. Elchey; "everybody said there was some special reason for his selection that has never come before the Council? None of the members, to my certain knowledge, ever heard the man's name before."

"Really, Mr. Elchey, you have no more reason to complain than I have. Sir George Blitzen had been down in Pundrapore inquiring about Grantley's management, or rather

mismanagement and his Excellency reported so strongly in favour of Grantley's withdrawal that I had him at once transferred to Kaifabad; and I wrote to Sir George begging him to recommend one of his best officers for the vacancy, for it was necessary in the unsettled condition of Pundrapore that the Resident should be a military man. He recommended Jones, and I appointed him on Sir George's recommendation, and there the story ends; and I must say that Captain Jones has not disgraced the Commander-in-Chief's patronage."

"Well, he must have been a very modest man to hide his light so completely under a bushel," said, with a satiric laugh, General Brymston, the military member, whose nephew, Colonel Congreve, had been among the disappointed candidates.

"Just what I said to Sir George, General," said his Excellency; "and all the answer I got was, '*he's the man for Pundrapore*;' and really I don't think we have any reason to complain."

And so the Council sat down, and resolved that the Begum of Pundrapore should await the pleasure of Government, under surveillance, at the fortress of Chunar; that Taptee Rao should be advanced to the dignity of Rae Bahadoor, and should take charge of the fiscal and judicial management of the Pundrapore state, in conjunction with the British Resident; and that the latter officer should act as guardian of the young Nawab's person, and make such provision as was necessary for the maintenance and education of a prince of his rank.

But the public had not yet heard the last of Pundrapore. Mr. Deek, M.P., who wanted to get into the Board of Control, and was taking a course of the Calcutta papers, had stumbled upon Captain Jones's ap-

pointment. To find Pundrapore in the map of India, and to turn up the history of the principality in 'Thorn-ton's Gazetteer,' was the work of an instant, and that very night Mr. Deek gave notice that he would call the attention of the Right Honourable the President of the Board of Control to a recent instance of the exercise of the Governor-General's patronage, and call for the production of the papers connected with the appointment of Captain Jones to the Pundrapore Residency. And Mr. Deek did call attention to the Pundrapore Residency in a speech which lasted two hours and a half, in the course of which he detailed the history of Pundrapore from the invasion of Mohammed of Ghizni down to Captain Jones's appointment, quoting largely from 'Mill's History,' 'The Collection of Treaties, Engagements, and Sunnuds,' and the 'Charter Blue-Books.' There were scarcely forty members present when the President was roused from his slumbers to defend the Government of Bengal. "There would nothing," said the right honourable gentleman, "have given the Board of Control so much pleasure as to produce the papers which the honourable gentleman had so eloquently called for, *if they only had existed.* As for the appointment of Captain Jones, it was easily explained; he was the fittest man for the post. I may mention," continued the President, "that a despatch has this day been received by the Board, stating that the officer whose appointment had been called in question has saved the Pundrapore state from a very serious insurrection, and has probably spared the Government the unpleasant task of annexing the territory. I shall be very happy, in the course of a few days, to lay the paper upon the table for the information of the honourable member who

takes such an interest in the affairs of Pundrapore." The President sat down, and Mr. Deek collapsed into the smallest possible bulk, cursing his unlucky curiosity, as he read next morning in the 'Times' that, "in reply to a question from Mr. Deek, the President of the Board of Control said so and so." His great speech was thus denied to posterity.

The President was right; there were no official papers connected with Captain Jones's appointment. Sir George Blitzen is dead and gone, and we shall offer no indignity to the memory of that distinguished soldier if we print the following private epistle which has come into our hands :

"From Major-General Sir GEORGE BLITZEN, K.C.B.K.H., to Major SPRINGER, Military Secretary on leave at the Presidency.

"MUSSOORIE, 16th March 18 .

"MY DEAR SPRINGER,—I have just got back here again, and deuced glad I am to escape the infernal heat of the plains. The march from Pundrapore was as hot as if there had been only a sheet of pasteboard between us and the devil's own dominions. Talking of Pundrapore, there will be a nice mess there one of these days. The Begum is a tigress—a perfect hyena for untamableness. In fact, I may say she is the only woman that ever braved George Blitzen, and I saw *something* of the sex when I was a *chhokra* with Sir Arthur in the Peninsula. A nice game she and that drawing-room soldier Grantley are playing, but I will put a spoke in her wheel. The Governor-general has given me the nomination of the next Resident, and by G—d I'll send her the ugliest fellow in the Service. Now, Springer, you must find out

who that clumsy clown was that poked his head into my stomach at Bustlepore, for as sure as my name is George Blitzen he shall have the post. My lady Begum will then find that, if her plots can only be carried out by making love to the Resident, she must at least make love to a less pleasant object than Grantley. As for his qualifications, they be d-mned. Pundrapore must be annexed within the year, and it does not matter a straw what sort of a Resident is sent there. If the Begum knock the new man upon the head, the service will more easily spare him than a better officer. Bring up a lot of pickles and tinned meat with you, for the *ménage* here is beastly; and try and persuade Mrs. Cockett—Cockett of the Toshakhana Office's wife, you know—that the air of Mussoorie would be salubrious for her constitution during the next two months. There are three or four Rattle girls here, who are very jolly, and have been flirting heavily with some of the 14th. Order every 14th man to join his regiment without delay. Send a packet of 'Calcutta Christian Intelligencers' by overland mail to Lady Blitzen, who is fond of that sort of literature.—Ever, yours,

"GEORGE BLITZEN."

This letter bears the following indorsement in the hand of the late Colonel Springer, C. B.:—"Poor Sir George! will ever the man grow old? Captain Jones, of the Junglywallahs, may thank his Excellency's *aperta injuriam formæ* for a snug berth."

And this was the mystery of Captain Jones's appointment. Captain Jones discharged the duties of his post with some credit until Captain Grantley's retirement from the Kaifiabad Residency, when, upon the recommendation of his patron, Sir George Blitzen, he was transferred to that innocent office, and Mr. Harcourt succeeded to the Pundrapore Residency. During the remainder of his service in the East, Jones continued to be held in great respect among diplomatists, and when he retired, the 'Peon' devoted half a column to his merits and services—it was in the "silly season," when news was scarce. The Captain—he is now Colonel, however—still lives upon his laurels, and devotes his leisure to his favourite task of composing epitaphs, in none of which does he omit his valuable services rendered to Government when he filled the Residency of Pundrapore.

NEW BOOKS.

It is but a repetition of a very trite sentiment to say that we are less impressed by the innate greatness of any subject or object than by its relation of nearness or distance to ourselves. The lights and shadows upon the gentlest little English hill are more to the dwellers at its foot than those atmospheric vicissitudes which make the brows of Mont Blanc splendid, or redden the peaks of Chimborazo; and ten times less momentous to us is the pestilence or famine which decimates an Eastern province, than one starving family appealing to our charity in our particular village. Even when our thoughts are directed to distant matters, it is some comparatively trifling detail, and not a great general view, upon which the imagination seizes. We all are aware of the extraordinary extent of our Indian Empire, and its present and prospective greatness. It is one of the things we are perfectly inclined to produce, as Dogberry did his reading and writing, when there is no occasion for such vanities; yet we believe that one glance at Mr. Hunter's* valuable book will impress the reader more deeply with the magnitude of British power in India, than all the swelling words that have been said on the subject for a hundred years past. Mr. Hunter has already distinguished himself by two volumes, which he has entitled '*Annals of Rural Bengal*,' a work which he carries on by this exhaustive and most interesting history of one province of Bengal—the home of the great Jagannath (according to the new spelling; in our days it was Juggernaut); a province which has the further distinction of having

been within everybody's recollection swept by a famine so terrible that it made some sort of mark even upon our distant imaginations. Mr. Hunter begins by telling us how his work was brought into being, or rather how it was suggested by the long, elaborate, and vain attempt of the Indian government to acquire actual knowledge of the land, people, distinctions, and peculiarities of its large empire. So vast a region crowded with different races, different religions, and even infinite varieties of each known type both of creed and race, presents a problem for Government scarcely less overwhelming than its own magnitude and numbers; and when we consider how the English race has stumbled haphazard into a continually extending sway over this crowd of nations, the wonder grows how a work so prodigious, and so hastily and inadvertently undertaken, could have been done half so well. Begun without any plan, carried on without any precedent, in ignorance, or at the best most superficial knowledge, amid a hundred conflicting interests, of which the governing race could be but partially aware, the Government of India, with all its defects, is perhaps the greatest triumph of English character, energy, and individual wisdom and justice. We doubt whether any other modern race is capable of having produced so many individual rulers possessed of such strong instinct of government, and, on the whole, sense of justice, as have succeeded in attaching the great, ancient, and mysterious Eastern world to our distant island. For it must always be kept in mind that the government of India

* Orissa, by W. W. Hunter. Smith, Elder, & Co. 1872.

has been conducted not by the constitutional means familiar to Englishmen, but by individuals, by experiments, by sudden inventions of statesmanship—in a word, by instinct. Englishmen of all classes and all kinds of training have stumbled into empire, among races more subtle, more highly cultivated, more ancient than their own; among influences strange to them; among traditions which, in the nature of things, they could but barely understand; and they have not only retained and increased that empire, but, on the whole, have improved the condition of their subject races, ameliorated existence, and raised the level of being. This has been done without any very lofty pretensions, without any ideal aim, without any carefully-considered scheme or unity of intention. It is, we repeat, the greatest triumph, not of English character only, but of governing instinct and individualism ever known in this world. Even the sway of ancient Rome, which is its only prototype, fails to come up to its magnitude and duration. The state of affairs has doubtless changed to some extent nowadays, when systematic government has superseded the inspiration of the beginning; but still, and for many generations, individual force and character must continue to tell in India as they can tell nowhere else; and fortunately the race of governing individuals does not seem yet to have begun to fail.

An English critic may be excused for giving forth a trumpet-note over this victory of British genius and power; though this is not what we meant to say in beginning, but rather to inform the reader of the most necessary, and, one would suppose, indispensable inquiry into the character, customs, and history of the races of India,

which the English Government has several times set on foot—which it has happily managed to do without thus far—but which becomes more necessary every day, as the nature of the British sway in India changes with the changes of the Anglo-Saxon peoples. To have gone on up to this time with so very imperfect a knowledge of the governed country and its inhabitants, is a miracle; but miracles cannot be expected to continue. Mr. Hunter gives the following account of the work really done by the Indian Government while thus groping in the twilight of their imperfect knowledge, and ruling, as we have said, by instinct; and of their first attempt to acquire the information which, according to all ordinary rules, ought to have been their first qualification for their work:—

“The English found India strewn with the wrecks of Asiatic despotism; and out of the drift-wood which the tempest threw up, they had to build the fabric of a civilised government. How these political Crusoes hewed their log into a seaworthy ship, is a story which touches the honour of England to have one day truly written. Every year of the past century has rendered the rulers more alive to the inadequacies of their administration. Scarcely had they put down armed violence and rapine—a task which no Native Power had permanently succeeded in—than they found themselves confronted with a necessity for a great apparatus of civil government, such as no Native Power had ever attempted to supply. As property accumulated, new and costly machinery had to be organised for protecting it; and as personal rights developed, courts had to be multiplied for ascertaining and enforcing them. Government ceased to be what, during at least two centuries, it had been in India—a mere engine for raising revenue. And now that justice has been brought very near to the people, new functions of government, formerly unrealised, are pressing upon the conscience of the rulers. Philosophers believed that they

had found the stationary type of human society in the arrested mental activity and low physical tone of the Indian races. But within the past twenty years a vast system of State Education has quickened the intellectual torpor into new forms of life, and a costly sanitary organisation is battling in every province with the endemics which for ages preyed upon the public health. What were once deemed direct visitations of God are now brought under the control of man. Famines, floods, droughts, and pestilence are no longer permitted to perform their ancient function of checking the pressure of the population on the soil; and Government has taken upon itself to step in between its subjects and the ordinary dealings of Providence. The isolation of each district, which formerly intensified every local scarcity into a famine, has been broken through. Railways, roads, and canals have welded the severed provinces of India into a homogeneous whole, mobilised the resources of each, and increased the efficiency of the national harvest in a greater degree than if we had suddenly doubled the productiveness of the soil. During the past few years the scope and responsibilities of Government have still further extended. It was reserved for the wise and brave man whose loss England is at this moment deploring, to grapple with the most terrible enemy of a tropical empire; and by a comprehensive scheme for the control and the husbanding of the water-supply, to remove death by starvation from among the ordinary risks of Indian peasant life.

"As Government became more effective it grew more costly. Each new function which it found itself compelled to undertake has involved an additional outlay of money. Yet any attempt at unwonted taxation among Asiatic races is beset with extreme peril; and the Company early realised that one of the first fiscal duties of its servants was the study of the people. No sooner had it, in 1769, appointed English officers for the rural administration of Bengal, than it issued an elaborate circular to them, calling for a historical and statistical account of the country. 'The form of the ancient constitution of the province compared with the present;' 'an account of its possessors or rulers, the order of their

succession, and the peculiar customs or privileges which they or their people have established or enjoyed;' a description of the land tenures, with a report on the commercial capabilities of the country, and the best means of developing its resources; these were the points to be taken up."

This endeavour, which was unsuccessful, has been repeated at intervals with more and more strenuous beginnings, and less and less success of execution, up to the present day. "Several isolated memoirs of great value" have been produced by it, but no great general work. This, according to Mr. Hunter, is very easily accounted for. "The truth is," he says, "the Company never realised the magnitude of what they were asking for. The Indian Empire consists of two separate Governments, who, with the feudatory States, administer a territory of 1,556,886 square miles, and include about fifty different races, speaking a great diversity of languages, and numbering 200,424,072 souls. The account of India, therefore, which, from time to time, has been so airily asked for, means a vast series of statistical operations and local inquiries spread over an area but slightly smaller than that of all Europe, excepting Russia." After so many failures, however, the key-note of success seems to have been struck at last; and with Mr. Hunter's volume has begun a new attempt to utilise all the previous collections of material, and to reveal, province by province, the great old mysterious continent of India in its past and its present, its products, its peoples, its languages, literature, and, above all, its religion, to the far-distant world which has become the centre of civilisation now, as it, too, was in its day. Mr. Hunter offers, in the end of his Introduction, a feeling

tribute to Lord Mayo, whose premature death is one of the greatest losses the country has sustained for many years. "I cannot but express," he says, "my unavailing regret that the great Indian statesman, to whom I owe it that I have been enabled to undertake the work, should not have been spared to see the initial result. A long list of great measures during the first three years bears witness to the silent, strong sense of Lord Mayo, to his steadfast courage and immense powers of work. His character and policy will stand out in colossal lines upon the Indian history of our time; and meanwhile there is not one who worked under him, from the least to the greatest, who does not mourn for him as a friend."

The special work now before us is interspersed by admirable descriptions of scenery and natural processes, such as would seem to have ceased long ago in our own continent, but which still continue in India. Mr. Hunter begins by a description of the curious lake of Chilka, which forms the southern boundary of Orissa—"a shallow inland sea" forty-four miles long, and in some parts twenty miles broad, the average depth of which is "from three to five feet, and scarcely anywhere reaches six." This extraordinary piece of water is divided from the ocean only by "a long strip of land which for miles consists of nothing but a sandy ridge little more than two hundred yards wide," beyond which "the roaring of the exterior unseen surf can be heard far across the lake." "A single narrow mouth cut through the sandy ridge connects it with the sea. Through this the tide comes rushing and storming against the outward currents, at certain seasons throwing itself up in pyramidal billows topped with spray, and looking like a boiling river in which no boat

could live." We cannot do more than point out to the reader the very effective and powerful sketch of this lake, and of "the eternal war" carried on all along the western shore of the Bay of Bengal between the rivers and the sea. The description of the rivers struggling downward laden with masses of silt, and of the efforts of the sea laden with sand to resist the invasion, throwing up a yellow bulwark of sand-cliffs, forcing the stream to wriggle through tortuous deltas, or penning up its waters almost within sight of ocean, is very able and picturesque. "The two sleepless artificers" who are thus continually at work "forming land out of water," are set before us in a few words with a vigour and force which are very rarely found in descriptions of scenery. The "landmaking rivers" interest us as much as if they were marauding chiefs; while the sea, like a wise and wily old potentate, throws his resisting powers against them with the subtlest skill, building up intrenchments and sandy fortifications. This work, we are told, is going on most vigorously at the present moment. At the upper end of the lake the same process is proceeding in a different way, the deposit of the rivers forming islands which gradually join together and tack themselves on to the mainland where the rivers enter the shallow lake. Nothing can be more curious and interesting than these strange natural processes thus carried on under the very eyes of living men. The mouths of the great Bengal rivers, Mr. Hunter tells us, are surrounded sometimes as much as sixty miles inland by "dense jungle impregnated with deadly malaria," through which the streams make their way in innumerable divisions; and he adds the following striking image:—

"In this way nature has provided

for herself vast silent workshops in which to conduct her secret processes of land-making undisturbed. When her labours are perfected, she makes over the result, without wage or fee, to men. But she will have no lookers-on to criticise her half-finished work, and she excludes prying eyes during the process by impenetrable miles of jungle, and by the pestiferous exhalations of the half-formed soil. And this she does in the true interests of man. For making land from water, like compressing a gas into a liquid, or smelting iron out of the earth, requires the free play of mighty forces; and the spectators, be they who they may, had better stand out of the way of the workmen."

Connected with this curious account of the natural forces at work, is the description of the state of the population in the neighbourhood of the Chilka lake. They are, Mr. Hunter tells us, like people in a state of siege. On one side of them are the rivers, with beds too narrow to convey their waters to the ocean; and on the other hand, that ocean itself, resisting the entrance of the rivers, dashing up the narrow passages with furious regiments of sea-waves, rising high above the level of the lake under the influence of the monsoon. The consequence is continual inundations, which sweep away farms, homesteads, cattle, and their owners. With his usual happy force of expression he describes the population as "gambling" for a rice crop from the temporarily dried-up shallows, and shows the rivers to us coming down "like furious bulls," bursting through the ineffectual bulwark of the dykes, making "fifty-two separate breaches," and carrying destruction and death wherever they sweep. Here is a brief but most striking description of the terrible flood which occurred no later than in 1866:—

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tied to the houses; and for miles the high-thatched roofs are firmly held down by bamboo stakes, so as to afford a refuge in time of flood. Starving colonics might be seen thus perched above the waters. Every banyan-tree had its rookery of human beings, while the Bráhmans effected settlements on the roofs of their brick temples, and looked down in safety as the flood roared past. The common danger disarmed all creatures of their natural antipathies. Snakes glided up to the roofs, and burrowed harmlessly in the thatch. Others, less fortunate, wriggled up trees, and whenever a canoe or a log of wood passed, slid down into the water, and swam along the surface, with head erect, towards the ark, which their instinct told them would bear them to dry land. From the first the cattle suffered terribly. Sheep and goats were carried away by herds in the torrent, and in a few days their carcasses came to the surface, and floated about covered with crows and scuffling kites. But the most pitiable sight of all was the plough-cattle standing in shallow parts up to their necks, and hungrily snuffing the barren waters for food, until they sank exhausted into the slime. During the first days of the flood every branch or twig or bundle of hay was covered with ants, beetles, lizards, and a hundred forms of minute life. But by degrees starvation did its work, and the wearied antennæ relaxed their hold. Before the thirty days were over, many a famished family had also sunk beneath the waters."

To remedy this tremendous danger, which keeps the country miserable, and makes improvement impossible, many devices have been thought of; and at least one bold and splendid plan, originated by Captain Harris, one of the many able Engineer officers who do credit to the scientific branch of our army, has been under the consideration of the authorities, though its magnitude and daring have up to this moment alarmed the cautious depositaries of power. Mr. Hunter describes the attempt of the Engineer to carry through his plan as the "spectacle of an earnest nature

"Most of the hamlets have boats

struggling, by an almost painful exercise of energy, to communicate its own motive power to the cautious weighty mass of which every safe government must consist." It is, in its way, another struggle of the river against the ocean; but in the mean time governmental caution has been too much for engineering genius, and the low-lying plains are still exposed to yearly floods. There is, however, something very fine and spirit-stirring in the almost unintentional way in which British exertion and talent are displayed to us in this book, toiling for the good of the helpless passive masses, which can stand still and be drowned with patient submission, but who can apparently do nothing better for themselves. No doubt English sway in India has its faults; but it has, at the same, many virtues which are but little acknowledged. Here is an instance in which Government appears like that beneficent good fairy of the world's most cherished romances, who at the very dreariest moment steps in for the reward of virtue. The little country of Pariku, on the banks of Lake Chilka, is under the sway of a Raja who, as a patriotic potentate should, devoted himself to his people during the famine — spending everything he had for their aid. "He emerged from those terrible eighteen months beggared; but the Government had not looked on unmoved, and the ruined Raja woke up one morning to find himself a Companion of the Star of India, and with a large Treasury advance at his disposal, to free him from the grasp of usury. With his concurrence, the collector temporarily took charge of his estates, and in a few years it is hoped that they will be returned unencumbered, with their net rental greatly increased by the more exact management which British officers have introduced." What a pity that this

delightful way of setting up an Encumbered Estates Commission should be confined to India!

We have said that in Orissa is the city and temple of Juggernaut, if Mr. Hunter will allow us for once to use the old spelling of our youth. Who is there who does not recollect the heartrending missionary descriptions, the wonderful woodcuts representing that horrible blood-stained car and the crowds of maddened pilgrims who threw themselves under its wheels? So intense has been our faith in this car and its victims, that it has come to be as favourite a similitude of English literature as the watery grave or the mountain's brow. But there is evidently no telling what this age will come to. Mr. Hunter has actually the hardihood to assert that our old blood-stained Idol is a god who hates blood, and that the victims of his car, if not simple invention, are, at the worst, victims of accident rather than of Jagannath. His account of the city of Puri, the gathering of the pilgrims which takes place there every year, and of all the rites which follow, is very interesting and curious. It is a terrible business, even though the wretched victims, who pour in in thousands from all the corners of India, do not throw themselves under the wheels of the car. What they actually do is bad enough. Mr. Hunter describes how the pilgrim-guide, or pilgrim-hunter, goes away over blazing India into the languid villages, and stirs the people in their death-alive by an account of all the glories of the great festival — the temple and towers of Jagannath, the baths which take away sins, and the sandy beach which is called the gate of heaven. The ancient and mystic meaning of this yearly festival was, as Mr. Hunter explains it, a very lofty and noble one. It was a grand proclamation in caste-maintaining India of the equality of all

men before God—men of every caste and condition being admitted to the rites of Jagannath's worship together, and together sharing the Sacred Food—which consists of rice cooked in the temple, a kind of sacramental fare which is passed from one class to another, and which the highest-caste Brahmin partakes with the lowest, without considering himself polluted. This admirable feature of the old custom has fallen into disuse, and some of the lowest castes are now shut out from the festival; but this is a violation of the ancient custom and rule. Mr. Hunter describes to us the flood of pilgrims constantly pouring night and day throughout the year over the Orissa roads, but chiefly at the time of the yearly celebration, when the different pilgrim bands, consisting of from twenty to three hundred persons, follow each other so closely as almost to form one continuous procession. A great proportion of these pilgrims are women, who generally walk from 800 to 600 miles, besides long journeys taken by railway where railways exist—and arrive, worn-out and miserable, with bleeding feet and failing strength, at the shrine. The central event is the great car-procession, but this is only the climax of a round of excitements. The throngs of white-draped figures in their clean garments are led from wonder to wonder in the holy city. They bathe daily in one of the sacred lakes, and sometimes in the sea, which throws up its wild surf on the sandy downs, entitled, by pious association, the gate of heaven. This latter scene affords a separate sketch, which will show the reader the true and sympathetic feeling with which the author enters into his subject, as well as his powers of description:—

great festival, as many as forty thousand rush together into the surf; and every evening silent groups may be seen purifying themselves for their devotions under the slanting rays of the sun. It is a spot sanctified by the funeral rites of generations. . . . The respectable Hindoo, with his sensitive shrinking from personal contamination, and from the details of human decay, resolves the frame into its elements by means of incremation. Every evening the funeral pyres may be seen glancing across the water, while groups sit sadly around in the fitful light. Devotees from every province of India come hither to do the last offices for a brother or a parent or a wife. I have talked to many pilgrims in this shrine of death, and, so far as one can judge of the inner life of another, some of them had drawn very near in their hearts to God.

"One little group came to bury their mother. They had journeyed with a pilgrim band from the far west, beyond the limits of British India, and had visited the great shrines at Allahâbâd, Benares, and Gya upon the way. They had done as much of the distance as they could by railway, but they had walked about eight hundred miles besides. The journey had taken three months. One-sixth of them had already died, and several had been so disabled as to require to finish their pilgrimage in a bullock-cart. But the oldest woman in the party—a brave up-country matron—had never flinched. She had constantly urged them forward, in order, she said, that she might reach the holy city before she died. The same day she arrived she prevailed upon the priests to conduct her to the temple, where she gazed in silent rapture on the god. Next morning she fell ill. The other pilgrims began to recover their strength, but she gradually declined, and now her sons had come to burn her body on the sands. She had reached the Gate of Heaven at last. They laid down the bier at the edge of the sea, till the ripples wetted the vermillion-sprinkled yellow shroud. A green leaf had been placed in her girdle, and another on her breast. Then, with all her ornaments around her arms and ankles, they laid her on the pile, and in a few minutes the forked flames flashed up into the skies."

"Here the pilgrims bathe. At the

The homeward journey after the

feast is, however, almost unmitigated horror. The pilgrims are miserably lodged; and the sacred food served out to them from the temples, though embodying a fine idea, unfortunately does not long continue so fresh as might be desired, but yet is the sole food of myriads, and has to be consumed even when in a state of advanced decay. There is so little accommodation for them, that forty-five people are described as having been lodged in a room which measured twelve feet by twenty, and with no windows; and as it is the season of the rains, the return of the poor wretches to their homes is attended by every possible aggravation of misery. "The details," says Mr. Hunter, "are so incredibly horrible that I do not venture to put them in my own words." Lying about in the soaking rain, often without money to proceed on their journey, they die in crowds; their paths haunted by horrible attendants in the shape of vultures and wild dogs, who devour the dead. Ten thousand persons in a year, Mr. Hunter tells us, according to the most moderate computation, thus perish on the way; and the survivors carry cholera with them throughout the whole breadth of India, whence it travels on to devastate Europe. The picture is too terrible; and we doubt whether the fabulous car of Juggernaut, which we once believed in, could have cost so many lives or caused such immense suffering. Yet the stream continues month by month and year by year undiminished. Mr. Hunter dwells on this subject not by way of aggravating the horrors of the scene, or pointing any moral of the degradation of the idol-worshippers—for his view of the spiritual meaning which lies behind all the myths of Brahmanical lore, and all the stocks

and stones of vulgar worship, is very lofty and serious—but in discussion of the difficulties encountered by the Indian Government in its attempts to mitigate this misery or prevent it. "Medical men," he says, "are driven from one project to another, as each is found to be either too costly to Government, or too opposed to the superstitions of the natives." Thus once more his story, without meaning it, reveals to us the ceaseless beneficent watch which another race and a science most different from their own are keeping up over those passive and miserable masses; and in the midst of all our mammon-worship, our hunger for wealth and indifference how it is made, there remains something in this which we can lay as an unction to our soul.

We cannot follow our author through all the details of his valuable work—his sketch of the primitive people and primitive dwelling-places of his province, and of the successive developments of religion which have swept through it. Nothing could be more interesting than the latter, but our space forbids us to follow out the subject. Before, however, we plunge into the very different atmosphere of Scotch religious politics as unfolded by Dean Stanley, we recommend 'Orissa' to all readers, as not only a valuable and interesting book, but one full of admirable and vigorous narrative, a real reproduction of a new sphere and society, such as adds with almost the force of a personal experience to our knowledge of the world.

Dean Stanley's* book about the Scotch Church—or rather the course of lectures delivered in Edinburgh, which has now made its appearance as a separate volume—is one of the

* Lectures on the History of the Church of Scotland; delivered in Edinburgh in 1872. J. Murray. 1872.

very few instances extant of a dispassionate, impartial, and almost more than impartial—a fair, tolerant, and sympathetic view of one Church produced by a member of another. Such pictures are very rare, and their rarity increases their value. Dean Stanley has said many things for the Church of Scotland which no corporation could so fitly say for itself. He has discriminated her individual aspect with a fine and delicate touch; and what is still more difficult, he has done all this without a trace of that condescending affability with which the most liberal of English churchmen patronise the homelier “sister Church”—to which the other and more influential half of the Anglican Establishment denies any standing-ground at all. There is a great deal of bad taste, to use the lightest expression, in the attitude assumed by English Churchmen generally towards the Church of Scotland; its only counterpart and fitting retribution being the equal or perhaps superior, though in some points of view more justifiable, bad taste with which the zealous Roman Catholic treats the Church of England. The calm ignorance of those Englishmen who will soon crowd out the native Scots from their own moors and lochs, of the very heart and essence of the national existence of Scotland, and of one of the most striking episodes of modern history, is about as curious a peculiarity as is to be found among the many odd peculiarities of Anglo-Saxon character. The episode of the Glengarry sermons last year, which roused so extraordinary an agitation, will be fresh in everybody’s memory; and surely, to set all religious feelings apart, and all idea of brotherly-kindness and Christian sympathy, a more unhandsome manner of receiving hospitality could scarcely have been imagined.

Dean Stanley has done his best to

make up for the churlish incivility of his fellow-Churchmen; and at the same time he has done more than this. He has produced a very admirable picture of those centuries of Scotch history, which can never be separated, as in other countries, into a large political and a small ecclesiastical chapter, but in which secular affairs are so woven in with spiritual, as to be altogether unintelligible without them. Of all the odd devices ever practised in history, the expedient of depreciating the national importance of the Church of Scotland is about the most foolish. Not only are many of the finest and most romantic episodes in our annals connected with it, but its curious mixture of charity and intolerance, of freedom and absolutism, of somewhat tyrannical detail and minute matter of fact with a visionary idealism so lofty as to be comprehensible only to the impassioned imagination, have become the very essence of the national character. Dean Stanley does full justice to what we may call the secular importance of the position assumed by the Church in Scotland. From the time when, so far as posterity and the interests of the world were concerned, Columba and his successors were Scotland, down to the stirring and eventful Reformation period, and through all that tremendous episode known in Scottish phraseology as the time of the “Persecution,” to the calm sway of Moderatism in the last century, he treats its successive developments with a skilful hand; and the width of his sympathies may be understood from the fact that the impassioned and intolerant Rutherford, at once the tenderest and fiercest of Scotch polemicists, finds a place in his regard and comprehension beside, and scarcely inferior to, the broad and Catholic sweetness of Archbishop Leighton.

Indeed, it is very possible that to many Scotchmen thoroughly acquainted with their Church's history, the beautiful quotations from Rutherford's Letters made in Dean Stanley's second lecture may recall a forgotten greatness, almost totally fallen out of recollection. A fine and discriminating mind, full of fellow-feeling with everything noble in character and beautiful in sentiment and expression, cannot touch the page of history without calling forth those faded pictures which require the warmth of human sympathy to make them clear; and this action of the warm and living fire of genial humanity is visible throughout almost every page of these Lectures. Dean Stanley does not shut his eyes to the less amiable features of Scotch character and churchmanship; but it is more congenial to his nature to turn to those aspects with which he is most in sympathy, and which his very sympathy brings to life as by a charm.

The chief point to which we feel inclined to object in Dean Stanley's admirable estimate of Scotch ecclesiasticism, is his chapter on Moderation in the Church of Scotland. It is easy to understand how upon a mind so catholic, so comprehensive, so disinclined to anything like anathema and exclusion, the mere name of "Moderate" has a certain prepossessing influence all the more that it has been used as a name of reproach, as if that important quality were unworthy of a place in the economy of Christianity. We should be unworthy Scots if we objected in any way to the claim of intellectual eminence which Dean Stanley makes for those Scotch divines who, during this middle period of Scotch ecclesiastical history, carried their powers into other fields than that of theology. Such names as that of Robertson, Fergusson, and

Home, are honourable to the Church as well as to the nation. We think, however, that in selecting those eminent examples of the highest class of moderate churchmen in Scotland, Dean Stanley forgets that the calmness, almost amounting to indifference, of their Christianity, whatever might have been its immediate effect in the higher places of the national life, degenerated in their inferior brethren into (in many cases, a complete negation of religion, and was, by this means, highly detrimental to the spiritual character of the country. No mass of people was ever yet penetrated by those cultivated and calm perceptions of the beauties of Christianity, that deification of abstract principles, mild worship of virtue, culture, and enlightenment, which were their highest sentiments. Such principles may preserve the higher minds of men who, by their temperament or position, are set above the vulgar forms of temptation; but we do not think that they have ever been found sufficient to leaven a nation; and though the conditions of society which produced, and were in their turn, reproduced, by such men, may be excellent in a mental point of view, good for literature and toleration, so long as they last, we think there can be little doubt that their final and universal influence is the reverse of good. Few things tend more effectually to separate the class which should be teachers of the people, from the people; or to make of them a class of illuminati moved rather by contempt than by sympathy towards the common mass. The results of the sway of such a cultivated, tolerant, superior, and good-humouredly contemptuous party of religious leaders is, we think, almost inevitably religious indifference, levity, and profaneness on the part of the people; and, in the extreme force of

the reaction, violence, bigotry, and a doubly narrow religiousness on the part of those Reformers whom the next wave of spiritual earnestness brings into being. The reign of Moderation in England, as well as in Scotland, seems to us to have most distinctly produced this effect. The people of both countries were probably never more entirely under the sway of religious indifference, coarse levity, and a good-humoured debasement of morals and manners than when their spiritual leaders were occupying the highest place in the intellectual world, producing histories, tragedies, nay, even triumphant 'Apologies' for revealed truth. These were the days of Parson Trullibar, and of the more genial but not more spiritual ministers who have contributed many an excellent story to Dean Ramsay's famous collections. It is beyond all question the most humorous period of the Church in Scotland; and Dean Stanley appreciates fully that most characteristic humour; but it certainly was the least spiritual and the least elevated. Dr. Stanley, indeed, as much as confesses this, by allowing that during last century the interest of the historical observer shifts from the Established Church of Scotland to the persecuted Episcopalian remnant, which then held the position of suffering and struggle which the Revolution Settlement had abolished so far as the National Church was concerned. Ease, comfort, satisfaction with one's own condition, general urbanity and toleration, even when conjoined with high intellectual advancement, though delightful socially, are neither interesting nor influential nationally. They may give dignity to the deliberations of an Assembly, and convey to strangers a more elevated opinion of ecclesiastical bodies in general, and the Church

they represent in particular; but they are lacking in that keenness of true feeling, that prick and stimulus of life, that touch of something more than virtue, something higher than intellect which is necessary to move a nation. Their reign is flat in history, and passively pernicious in morals. They have the commendation of those who do well for themselves — a limited and, after all, secondary and evanescent praise; but they lack the higher glory of more faulty men, the power of moving others strongly, of turning the tide of prevailing impulse, of making those spiritual motives which are often not conducive to comfort understood among men. We do not refuse to acknowledge their part, among others, in building up the corporation of the Church, and widening its material and mental bases; but the spiritual influence which, apart from all questions of internal economy, is the great use of every Church, was, we believe, at the lowest ebb under their sway; and naturally so—such an influence being far from the first in their thoughts, and indeed comparatively without importance in their mild and intellectual sphere.

Dean Stanley's remarks upon what we may venture to call the Absolutist side of the religious development of Scotland, strike us as more true and wisely characterised. In speaking of the great event of the Disruption in 1843, the only romantic incident of modern religion, he discriminates very judiciously between the generosity and loftiness of individual sentiment and the weakness of fundamental principle. "There was no other country in the world," he says, "where so noble a testimony could have been borne to the sacredness and tenderness of scrupulous consciences. But it is no less true that in no other country in the

world would the consciences of so many able and excellent men have been so deeply wounded by the intricacies of a legal suit, of which the point at issue can only be understood by a searching investigation of conflicting statements, even amongst those who are most keen in the controversy." These words sum up the whole matter with wonderful conciseness and force. The sacrifice by four hundred men of their whole subsistence for a matter of conscience, is a fact which must strike everybody capable of being moved by generous effort with a very rapture of surprised enthusiasm. But the moment we begin to bring the cause of this sacrifice down to the ordinary practical rules of human existence, our first impulse of simple applause is curiously checked. The best that can be said of it is, that it is the triumph of the abstract over the real, of an impracticable ideal over all the restraints of fact and the conditions of human nature. It is a great deal more like the late movement in the Church of Rome than any other we know of, although the one tends to autocratic and the other to democratic absolutism. Both are an attempt to separate the Church from the State—the soul from the body, as it were—rejecting the thousand complex bonds of union between the one and the other. In both the step originated in a legitimate endeavour to make the Church its own ruler, and to exempt the spiritual from the sway of the secular; but how curiously the sublimity of the theory becomes ridiculous when it is brought down to matter of fact! The "Headship of Christ" has an imposing sound, whether it means the headship of Christ's Vicar or the sway of the Kirk-Session; but the doctrine is curiously confusing when we come to consider it under the aspect of a question whether or

not every congregation, after more or less squabbling, should have the absolute right of electing its minister! The idea of rending a nation in two for this, is less lofty and less satisfactory. There is the most curious contrast between this absolutist protest and demonstration of idealism, and the indifference of the early Scottish Church, which Dean Stanley skilfully indicates, to any unchangeable theory of Church government. Probably of all Scotch churchmen known to fame, Knox would have been the one most surprised and most disturbed by the Free Church's romance of Ecclesiasticism.

We cannot do better than sum up by a quotation, which at once embodies Dean Stanley's theory and shows how charmingly he can tell a story, while at the same time it offers a pleasant precedent for his own position, and example for times to come. It is from his sermon preached in Greyfriars' Church in Edinburgh, which is printed at the beginning of his Lectures, and called "The Eleventh Commandment."

"But there is yet another eleventh commandment, not of the world, nor yet of mere churches or sects—the true eleventh commandment of the Christian religion. I have spoken of that Samaritan commandment as I have seen it far away in the sunny vale of Shechem, beneath the grey cliffs of Mount Gerizim. May I introduce this Christian commandment by a scene nearer home, within the bounds of your own kingdom and Church of Scotland—a story known, doubtless, to many among you, but which a stranger may be permitted to recall? There may be some here present who have visited the retired vale of Anwoth, on the shores of Galloway. In the seventeenth century the minister of the parish of Anwoth was the famous Samuel Rutherford, the great religious oracle of the Covenanters and their adherents. It was, as all readers of his letters will remember, the spot

which he most loved on earth. The very swallows and sparrows which found their nests in the church of Anwoth were, when far away, the objects of his affectionate envy. Its hills and valleys were the witnesses of his ardent devotion when living; they still retain his memory with unshaken fidelity. It is one of the traditions thus cherished on the spot, that on a Saturday evening, at one of those family gatherings whence, in the language of the great Scottish poet,

‘Old Scotia’s grandeur springs,’

when Rutherford was catechising his children and servants, that a stranger knocked at the door of the manse, and (like the young English traveller in the celebrated romance which has given fresh life to those same hills in our own age) begged shelter for the night. The minister kindly received him, and asked him to take his place amongst the family, and assist at their religious services. It happened that the question in the catechism which came to the stranger’s turn was that which asks, ‘How many commandments are there?’ He answered, ‘Eleven.’ ‘Eleven!’ exclaimed Rutherford. ‘I am surprised that a person of your age and appearance should not know better. What do you mean?’ And he answered, ‘A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another. As I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.’ Rutherford was much impressed by the answer, and they retired to rest. The next morning he rose early to meditate on the services of the day. The old manse of Anwoth stood—its site is still pointed out—in the corner of a field near the hillside, and thence a long winding wooded path, still called Rutherford’s Walk, leads to the church. Through this glen he passed; and as he threaded his way through the thicket he heard amongst the trees the voice of the stranger at his morning devotions. The elevation of the sentiments and of the expressions convinced him that

it was no common man. He accosted him, and the traveller confessed that he was no other than the great divine and scholar, Archbishop Usher, the Primate of the Church of Ireland, one of the best and most learned men of his age, who well fulfilled that new commandment in the love which he won and which he bore to others; one of the few links of Christian charity between the fierce contending factions of that time, devoted to King Charles I. in his lifetime, and honoured in his grave by the Protector Cromwell. He it was who, attracted by Rutherford’s fame, had thus come in disguise to see him in the privacy of his own house. The stern Covenanter welcomed the strange prelate; side by side they pursued their way along Rutherford’s Walk to the little church, of which the ruins still remain, and in that small Presbyterian sanctuary, from Rutherford’s rustic pulpit, the Archbishop preached to the people of Anwoth on the words which had so startled his host the evening before: ‘A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another.’”

We take up the weighty volumes which contain the remains of the late distinguished scholar Professor Conington,* with less inclination to criticise his work than to make acquaintance with the man—a man of a type which is becoming rare, and which has if not an active and powerful, yet certainly a very evident influence upon the rising race. The memoir, however, here given to us is a very meagre and shadowy one. “The lives of literary men do not often offer any considerable variety of incident,” says the biographer, “and that of Professor Conington was far from being an exception to the general rule.” He died while still comparatively young, as so many such men do, leaving nothing behind him but the reminiscences of the University, and the still more noiseless ones of the family, to record

* *Miscellaneous Writings of J. Conington, M.A.*; with Memoir by H. J. S. Smith, M.A. LL.D. F.R.S. Longmans, 1872.

the blameless existence which he lived upon this earth for forty-four years. He was a typical scholar, the very impersonation of that fine tact, fine memory, and fine mental instinct, if we may use such a word, which serve a man heir to the wealth of the past and make him its best interpreter to the present. That these qualities which make up a heaven-born translator were increased and enlarged by a considerable critical power in the higher sense of the word, his articles, republished in these volumes, upon several of Shakespeare's dramas and other subjects, will fully evidence. Such studies, however, were but the pastimes of his mind. His chief vocation was that of an interpreter, and his life was spent in the occupation of conveying to the unlearned the wisdom and sentiments of some of the greatest voices of the past. This is an important office, but yet it is to a certain extent a humble one. When it is taken up by a man of original talent, there is a certain self-abnegation in it which fills the reader with surprised admiration. It conveys to us an impression of self-denial and intellectual humility; though, perhaps, these modest sentiments are less inevitable in the midst of the learned leisure of a University life, where the great poets of antiquity are nearer to men than in other places, and where the exact rendering of a phrase or a similitude seems a greater thing than it does in more active life.

Mr. Conington was one of the men of whom we may say that Oxford was made for them and they for Oxford.

"He would rather have at his bed-head
Twenty books yclothed in black or red,"

than all the lands and seignory that fortune could bestow upon him. From the very beginning of his life he was

a scholar. He could read for his own amusement at the age of three years and a-half. At six he slept with his Bible under his pillow, that he might begin to read it as soon as he should wake. When he was eight years old "he would amuse himself by comparing different editions of Virgil, and even before he was eight he repeated a thousand lines of Virgil to his father." He was the eldest son of a clergyman—the Rev. Richard Conington of Fishtoft, near Boston—and the grave and studious child was very early leavened with Bible-training, as well as with the beginning of classical knowledge. In 1838, when he was thirteen, he exhausted all his pocket-money in buying a copy of Sotheby's Homer, which he found at a book-shop—a very significant acquisition. Immediately after, he was sent to Rugby. Those critics to whom a boy is nothing if not muscular, will possibly lose their interest in him when they are told that this young scholar had no love for athletics. "He probably never took part in a game of cricket or football except against his will," his biographer ventures to say; and perhaps for that reason Dr. Arnold, notwithstanding his wonderful insight into the minds of boys, did not fully understand this one, whose quiet and thoughtful nature was prematurely serious, and whose letters have a gravity about them from his earliest years which seems excessive. However, in 1839, at fourteen years of age, he had beaten all the other boys in his form by the gigantic overplus of one thousand three hundred marks, a success such as very seldom shines upon a school-boy's career. At eighteen he went to Oxford, having first, however, let loose his youthful opinion in respect to the two universities in a remarkable manner. He had been led, from attentive observation of

the two systems, he says, to a conclusion that neither was perfect. And the way in which the serious boy of eighteen declares his judgment on the matter has a solemnity about it not unusual to youth, though its curiously formal and didactic form is little adapted to his age. We do not indeed, from the specimens before us, agree in what his biographer says of the freedom and happiness of Conington's epistolary style. It seems to us, on the contrary, somewhat heavy and elaborate, with a distinct consciousness of intellectual effort which is not pleasant in a letter. Perhaps, however, correspondence which is strictly on intellectual subjects, and contains little of the ebb and flow of personal feeling, can scarcely be expected to escape from this heaviness of form.

Conington's career at college was brilliant; he gained both the Ireland and Hertford scholarships in one year, the highest classical distinctions of the University; and though not quite so fortunate in lesser matters, distinguished himself highly, and concluded his education by his election to a fellowship at the University College in 1848, being then twenty-three. Nor was it entirely in scholarship that we find him interesting himself. He was a distinguished member of the "Union," and took a considerable share in its debates. The political extracts from his letters are dry, like the other extracts; they are almost too well expressed, but there is little individuality in them, and nothing of the natural instinctive charm of self-revelation. They afford us as little information about his character as they do about the colour of his eyes or the clothes he wore. The only real characteristic touch we notice is that in which, writing from Dresden, he expresses a hope "that

I have picked up something in consequence of leaving England;" "indeed," he adds, "it would be a pity if it were not so, as it is really the only thing to my mind which can justify going abroad at all, considering the superiority in almost every way of what one leaves behind." This is not a very improving sentiment for a young traveller, and it reveals a certain insensibility to external influences which is strongly opposed to the usual temperament of genius. It was only in 1854 that he was elected to the chair of Latin in Oxford, and in the interval between he hesitated, as so many young men do, not quite knowing what to make of the problem of his own life. He did a little reading for the law, and a little writing for the newspapers; the latter somewhat fitfully, for he wrote well, his biographer tells us, "only when he wrote from strong conviction," a state of things very unlikely to be attainable in respect to any subject treated in the pages of a newspaper. His real vocation, however, had been attained when he returned to Oxford, and from that moment till the end of his life he had no longer any difficulty about what was his sphere and duty.

It is here, however, that his biographer informs us of a circumstance which gives a strange beauty and meaning to this otherwise unnoticeable and uneventful existence. Conington had received the religious education natural to a child brought up in a parsonage by pious and exemplary parents; but when his youth matured into manhood, and his life settled down into the serious channel of work and duty, the habitual religiousness of his early years, and the intellectual haze which had come over that religiousness under the influence of education were suddenly superseded

by a more potent influence. That strange crisis in life when a man realises all that he has been taught to believe, and exchanges vague faith for absolute conviction, came to the scholar unawares, as it has done to so many. Had that little memoir of Conington been a religious biography, no doubt this would have been called his conversion. And though this peculiar phraseology is not employed, yet the mysterious crisis, it is apparent, was unmistakable. Such a moment is sufficient to give interest to the flattest and dullest existence, and it strikes us almost with awe when it suddenly appears—like a relic of the ancient primitive times, when God and man communicated more visibly than now—from out the gentle calm of the scholar's blameless life, disturbed by no passion, convulsed by no vices. It is thus described, in restrained brevity and seriousness which suit the subject, by the friend who writes his memoir:—

"At the time at which he had now arrived, a change passed over the tenor of his thoughts—a change which was as sudden as it was complete and enduring. As he described it himself, a sense of the reality of eternal things was instantaneously borne in upon him while he was engaged in one of his ordinary occupations. For some weeks his mind was agitated and unstrung by this overwhelming consciousness of the immediate presence of the terrors of the unseen world. He was unable to take any interest in, or even to give any sustained attention to, any subject not directly affecting the momentous questions which engaged his thoughts. He would not even read the New Testament in Greek, apparently because the very language suggested associations which for the time had become repugnant to him. When he emerged from this state of depression, it was with the fixed determination to make the obligations of

religion, as he had learned them in his childhood, the sole governing principle of his life; and to this determination he consistently adhered. It was some little time before his mind completely recovered its calmness and energy, and before a settled and cheerful piety replaced the gloom which had for a while overshadowed him. There is a perfect love which casts out fear; but it is not in every saintly life that this perfection is realised; and perhaps of Conington it may be true to say that his mind was at all times too prone to dwell on the awfulness of eternity, and not ready enough to take comfort in the thought of eternal love. Perhaps also he never again allowed himself the same range of sympathy with all matters of human converse in which he had previously indulged. In after years he used not to advert to the circumstances of the change that had taken place in him; at the time he spoke of it to his intimate friends, unreservedly, it is true, but in the simplest language, and without any unnecessary dwelling on details. It cannot be wrong to record that he counted among his many friends some to whom that which had befallen him was unintelligible except when regarded as the passing weakness of an overwrought brain, and to whom it was as unwelcome as it was unintelligible. But the deep affectionateness and sincerity of his character prevented any one of his friendships from being broken, or even strained, by such a divergence of sentiment: he was, in fact, incapable of losing a friend whom he had once made. And if his interests were somewhat narrowed, they became even more intense; nor were they in any manner limited to sacred subjects. His enjoyment of philology, of poetical criticism, and of literature, became keener than ever; and if he cared less than formerly for social and political questions, he took an eager and prominent part in the ever-recurring discussions relating to the studies and reforms of the University."

The strange, half-apologetic tone in which this turning-point of life is chronicled is almost as remarkable as the incident itself. Such an in-

vasion of the supernatural into ordinary existence has no place in the philosophy of the highly-trained modern intellect. The little crowd of scholars, critics, and philosophers is vaguely disturbed by it, partially disapprove of it, find it "as unwelcome as it is unintelligible," but, bound by that high code of honour which cannot refuse to bow to the personal testimony of a man whose good faith is unquestionable, are forced to respect and allow what they cannot understand. A century ago, probably, Conington would probably have been calmly set down as a fanatic; but Oxford now is more respectful of the phenomena of the mind, even when she does not approve of them. Altogether, the incident and the way in which it is told give a singular interest to Professor Conington's life.

The same fact invests his death with the most touching interest. Perhaps to the reader Conington's name may mean only scholarship, only the mass of careful translation and accurate and searching criticism which he has left behind him. Yet we cannot but think that a higher interest altogether comes into it from the crisis above recorded, and from the affecting narrative of its conclusion. He died almost suddenly, after an illness of about a week; and the account of his last hours cannot be better given than in his biographer's simple, brief, and serious description of it.

"The whole truth was communicated without reserve to the sufferer, who even knew how many hours he had to live. As soon as some necessary business was done, he dismissed all earthly cares, and set himself to prepare for the immediate presence of death. Not in the remembrance of a life useful and innocent as his must be accounted among men, but only in the simplest teaching of his childhood, could he find any comfort. And ever

as he listened anew to these, his mind was harrowed by the terrible doubt, whether indeed they had any personal interest for him. While his consciousness remained unimpaired by the poison which was working in his blood, this state of anxiety and depression lasted; but those who watched by his bedside observed that it vanished at the first approach of the delirium which was to end in death. His utterances were now full of triumph: and so long as any faint light of reason remained unquenched, his wandering words seemed to tell of a divine ecstasy. At one time he would again and again repeat the lines, whence taken none of the listeners knew,—

"Now the vision is complete;
This is the way they speak in heaven;"

while again, a little later, his thoughts seem to turn once more to earth, or at least to her who on earth was dearest to him. 'There was God, and me, and my mother; and I was her guardian angel.'

How wonderful, how touching is this conclusion! Nothing in the poets he loved can surpass that ineffable rapture of the soul which, once hid in God, forgot all its doubts, its difficulties, and discouragements. His Virgil, even at that solemn voyage which he made into the depths of Hades, has recorded nothing more mysterious and solemn. To find such spiritual incidents in the life of an Oxford scholar of the present day, is to realise more than the modern mind is often permitted to do, that this is the very same world in which many a miracle and wonder have been wrought—the same earth from which has opened directly to many, for hundreds of years past, the very gate of heaven.

To estimate the work of such a man as Conington, is to ourselves a much less grateful task than to commemorate his life. That fine scholarship, of which he is one of the greatest modern examples, and which, though exquisite in verbal and grammatical science, does not confine itself

to that, but is at the same time profoundly sensitive to every inspiration of the great genius of the past, can never be anything but a great endowment, and can never lose its high place in the judgment of cultivated men. It seems to ourselves, however, rather the flower and perfection of the cultivated intelligence, the bright and finest product of the age, than a real influence in it. Generations of grammarians, crowds of duller scholars working conscientiously all their lives long at verbs and articles, get quickened now and then by some stray touch of genius, and produce a Conington; and there the process ends, having no further issue possible. He is a climax, not an origin; the influences which go out from him are necessarily smaller than himself, for he has reached as far as any man can reach in that task of Interpretation which is circumscribed by so many conditions. Translation is very captivating, but, we fear, on the whole, somewhat unsatisfactory work. It is chiefly acceptable, we believe, to those who have least need of it—to the readers who know the original, and are capable of seizing all the fine shades of comprehension shown by the translator, and of appreciating all the difficulties he has had to encounter. To such a one Conington's Virgil is delightful, and no doubt this is the audience which the scholar would choose and prefer. But the mere fact that he is best appreciated by such an audience makes his work an *article de luxe*, a beautiful superfluity for the intellectually rich rather than a serious gain to the ordinary world. We doubt much whether the mass of people to whom Virgil is unknown, except by name, will be to any great extent attracted by the translations contained in these volumes. But if we are right in our doubt, the fault will certainly

not be Conington's. So far as we are aware, no other interpreter of classic genius has shown so much versatile power of expression, or given himself so much trouble in the endeavour to open his favourite literature to the English nation. He has done something for all tastes; from the flowing measure of Scott—a measure which, we frankly confess, seems to us curiously inappropriate, mixing the Classic poet with the rude Gothic bard in the strangest confusion—to the stately and somewhat artificial sweetness of Spenser, is a great leap to make; and the poetic prose of the *Æneid* and *Georgics* given in the present volume is a style equally distant from both. His work in the Spenserian stanza was a labour of love. He made this effort, almost as difficult as that of acquiring a new language, in order to complete the translation of the 'Odyssey,' begun by his late accomplished and lamented friend, Philip Worsley. In all his styles, however, Conington is always poetic, always true to the sentiment as well as the sense of his original; and the very limitation of his probable success, which we have recorded, is at the same time his highest praise. He must always be most appreciated by those who are best fitted to judge.

We have had perhaps as much of Mendelssohn in one way or other as the literary part of him can bear; and we doubt whether the fresh dribblets of letters which every now and then reach the public are of much advantage either to his reputation or our enjoyment. There seems, however, a fervour of enthusiasm in the musical world to which all literary enthusiasm yields, and which is a puzzle and mystery to the uninitiated. Mendelssohn's letters in general are full of fresh and lively observation, and the over-

flowings of a happy and vivacious temperament—pleasantly stimulated by that confidence of success which makes a man easy and unembarrassed in the expression of his sentiments, and which makes success, according to the subtle French discrimination, one of the most certain elements of further successes. The little book which bears the somewhat solemn title of ‘Goethe and Mendelssohn,’* is in reality nothing but a very brief record from Mendelssohn’s childish letters of one or two brief meetings between the boy-musician and the venerable poet, in which the amusing sentimentalism of German hero-worship has succeeded in making a great deal out of very little. The picture of the “old lion,” however, petting the childish pianist, listening for hours to his improvisings, and receiving a “lesson,” in the shape of a succession of *morceaux* played in chronological order, and accompanied by expositions of each composer’s character and influence on musical art, from the “little Berliner,” whom he rewarded with a kiss, is a pretty picture. The strange old man, amid all his accumulated stores of knowledge, profiting by the boy’s fresh studies and happy genius, to learn a little more about an art not much known to him—and this at seventy-three—is an illustration worth adding to the records of that extraordinary self-absorbed existence to which every encounter and every emotion was a means of learning. The bright little confident boy himself, always affectionate, open-hearted, and modest, although full of that pleasant assurance of his power to please which a harsh critic might call vanity—but which, if vanity, is at least its most de-

lightful exhibition—is agreeably set before us by his own brisk hand. The substance of the little volume was, the author informs us, delivered as a lecture at a meeting of the “Historical Science Society,” held at Freiburg, in Breisgau, in March last, to celebrate the establishment of the German Empire; and for such an occasion it was no doubt very suitable, though whether it was worth the trouble of publication is a different matter. There is one delightful anecdote in it, however, which, though whimsically placed in a volume addressed rather to the musical *fanatic*, than to the ordinary reader, will, in this age of amateur concerts and social performances, go to the heart of many a victim. In the drowsy heat of these summer afternoons, which fashion devotes to morning concerts, or in the tropical atmosphere of a Soirée Musicale, who has not felt a longing to do as Goethe did? “He was no great friend to concerts or music, in a general way,” Dr. Karl Mendelssohn informs us; “and once at court, when a pianoforte-player was in the middle of a very long sonata, he got up, and to the horror of all the court ladies and gentlemen, said, ‘If it lasts three minutes longer, I confess everything!’” This little story is worth all the rest of the book.

There is no more difficult work for a contemporary than to criticise a new poem. In these days, verse has come to be so easy a medium of expression for the crowd of cultivated persons—men and women who have been trained upon the most delicate fare that earth provides, the best poetry and literature of the world, from their cradles—that it is

* Goethe and Mendelssohn. Translated from the German of Dr. Karl Mendelssohn Bartholdy by M. G. von Glehn. Macmillan & Co. 1872.

difficult to discriminate how much is culture and how much may be the germs of real power. The little poem* before us—a pretty book with a harsh title, and no name but the somewhat uneuphonious one of James Maclehose, Glasgow, upon its title-page—is one of which, from this reason, it is very difficult to form a judgment. Glasgow is scarcely the region to which we have been used to look for poetry, but neither is it a place from which we should have expected the elegant little volume, with its spotless creamy cover, which is a credit to Mr. Maclehose's taste and invention. Why such a discord of titles, however, should have confused its entrance into the world, we do not understand. Nothing but a wild Norse tale would have justified the name of Thorold Asgard and that of Olrig Grange: and this is no Norse tale, but a very simple and somewhat conventional story of unsuccessful love, and the damning effects of worldliness treated in the most modern way. The hero is one of those young men who abound in fiction—a man of genius, who goes out of his secluded home in the west of Scotland to win fortune and fame in London, where he gains access to fashionable society, and falls in love with one of those fashionable beauties capable of better things, but unable to break the charmed bonds of society, or to escape the fate which compels her to marry a wealthy baronet, instead of the young poet she prefers, who also are to be found in modern romances. There is a somewhat shadowy background of the hero's twin-sister and her lover, the German professor, Herman Kunst, who is professedly the editor of the tale; but neither Hester nor her Teuton are

much wanted in the narrative. The story is told with an adaptation of the device adopted by Mr. Browning in the "Ring and the Book," though it is, we need not say, infinitely less powerful, while at the same time we must acknowledge less tedious, than the framework of that wonderful poem. It is not the same event told a great many times over by the different personages, but rather a history of the event as it occurs, each individual voice coming in with its quota of personal act or opinion. The hero's part is confined to that of the prelude, in which he anticipates all that is to befall him, and specially the fame which does not, so far as we can see, crown his efforts—and to a monologue of retrospection and resigned contemplation of death in the end. The action is carried on entirely by the speeches, if we may call them so, of the beauty's father and mother, and her own answer to Thorold's suit; and this is the most original part of the book. We cannot say that Thorold himself strikes us as at all original. His genius (which is more talked about than made manifest), his trust in the woman who is unworthy of him, his patronising love for his sister, and even his religious doubts, are exactly the sort of thing which we have been familiar with for many a day; and we cannot congratulate the author on his success in trying the long-propheesied value of scientific facts in poetry, when he makes the finding of a rare flower, of which he is the first to discover the *habitat*, a turning-point in the life of his young poet, which teaches him the "passion of science," and which he considers as "almost the sole mark to know that I have lived." We are disposed to receive this statement

* Olrig Grange. Glasgow: Maclehose. 1872.

either with absolute incredulity or with ridicule; and we know all about Reason "buying clear views at a terrible price," and about "old forms dissolved in the crucible of thought." There might be interest in these crude questionings, in the days when Tennyson bade knowledge "mix with men and prosper;" when he vindicated doubt "honest," and threw into the distance the voice which was as that of "an infant crying for the light;" but we cannot stay at that point for twenty years; and Thorold, who is far from being Mr. Tennyson, is very flat in his pious uncertainties. There is, however, a sweet passive beauty about the following verses, which, if not lofty, is winning, and more satisfactory than the more ambitious intellectual struggles:—

"How sweet the old brook trickles still
Through daisy mead and golden broom,
Where once we placed our water-mill,
And heard it clinking in the gloom.
Hushed, sleepless, in our little room.
Yonder we caught the tiny trout,
Our first—you carried it about
All day, complaining of its doom,
And trying each pool if its life were gone out.

There are no traces of the mill,
But, lo! our garden in the nook,
The walk we shaped with simple skill,
Bordered with white stones from the brook;
And there are still some flowers we took
From garden-plots and planted here:
Our works decay and disappear,
God's frailest works abide, and look
Down on the ruins we toil to rear.

Ah me! what happy dreams we had!
And still they linger fondly here;
The air seems nimble with the glad
Quaint fancies of our childhood dear."

This idyllic strain is gently sweet, if nothing more. The following description of the manner in which the fashionable beauty received the homage of the world, and patronised and presented her young lion to

its favourable regard, is clever and true:—

"But she? Well, she was like a spring
Of purest water, cold and clear—
Where bright birds come to preen their wing,
And owls and ravens too appear.
She mirrored all as they drew near,
And they all drank, and left no trace,
But each man deemed he saw his face
Deep in her heart, and had no fear
That the shadow changed when he changed
his place.

Me for a while she honoured with
Selectest intercourse of few,
Rehearsing every night a myth
Of what I was, and how I grew
In a lone country-house, and knew,
Science-like, Pascal with no aid,
Except the quaintest little maid,
Who was a delicate genius too—
And how she had drawn me out of the shade."

The most powerful passage in the poem, however, is when the lady—after consultation with her mother, who is invalid and evangelical, one of the "holy worldly" class, and her father, who is an amateur of science and would-be philosopher (who "thought he thought, and yet he did not think, but only echoed still the common thought, as might an empty room")—at last announces to her lover that it is impossible she can accept him. She does this with a tragic passion and scorn of her own poor arguments, which is scarcely in keeping with the decision she makes, or Thorold's after-estimate of her, but which is striking and fine.

"A sad love. Yes! I call to mind
That fisherwoman long ago,
Who in the storm of sleet and wind
Lost all her sons at one fell blow,
Three stalwart men. We saw her go,
Don't you remember? with her dead—
Side by side the corpses laid,
Three long black coffins in a row
On the bench of the boat, head touching head.

Never a word came from her lips;
She took the helm and bent the sail,

And silently slid by the ships,
 Where strong men sob and women wall.
 Across the bar she caught the gale,
 And sped on o'er the darkening wave
 Into black night; she never gave
 One sign, but, tearless, hard, and pale,
 Sailed with her dead to their father's
 grave.

And now I go, like her, with all
 My dead hopes lying cold in me;
 The great mist cometh like a wall
 Of darkness striding o'er the sea;
 And all my dead are orderly
 Spread out beside me; and I know
 That they and I together go
 Into the black night, leaving thee;
 I and my dead hopes all in a row."

Our space does not permit us to enter into the clever sketch of the beauty's mother, who, deep in the Apocalypse and the conversion of the Jews, is still resolute for her daughter's good in the shape of the baronet:—

"She had
 A weary look, and yet the weariness
 Seemed not so native as the worldliness
 Which blended with it. Weary and
 worldly, she
 Had quite resigned herself to misery
 In this sad vale of tears, but fully meant
 To nurse her sorrow in a sumptuous
 fashion.
 And make it an expensive luxury."

The prosiness of these two last lines, counterbalancing the touch of insight in the first, is quite characteristic of the book, where there is a good deal that is halting and imperfect, along with much that is of excellent promise. We will not say that the author of 'Olrig Grange' is a poet, but he has sufficient faculty to do something much better worth his while than this, if he will only take trouble enough—that great, distinct, and unfailing characteristic of genius.

THE LATE EARL OF MAYO,

VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA.

To those who mourn for the honoured dead comes sooner or later a refreshing season, when contemplation of the departed and of his worth can turn the acuteness of sorrow. The horror aroused by the circumstances of a sudden death, the heart-sickness which the untimely ending of a great and useful career has engendered, the truth brought home with power to every mind that all is vanity, know at last alleviation. Sorrow for what is lost, no longer all-absorbing, is tempered by thought of that which is undying. There rises a soothing desire to stray among memories, to treasure up words and deeds and purposes, to measure thoroughly the spirit that has passed away, to distinguish the effect that it has left behind. We have reached such a day of retrospect in regard to the subject of this paper. The late Earl of Mayo, a most useful and a valued public servant, was, only a few months since, taken from us and from his labours by the blow of an assassin. The whole empire felt the shock. It raised its voice in indignation at the treacherous and unmerited stroke; it mourned sincerely for the illustrious victim; it will now find solace in counting up the many claims which he has upon public admiration and public gratitude. Another name has been added to the list of great examples. Let us assuage our grief by reflecting how great this example was!

There is a greatness which will find or make a course for itself as surely as the lightning; there is, again, a greatness which, genuine and undoubted though it be, brilliant as may be its manifestation when circumstances call for it, yet

does require to be evoked, and will be latent until the right occasion shall arrive. Of the latter class was the greatness of Lord Mayo. It certainly belonged to him. It shone forth in full power when the field was found for its exercise; but it might have been divined by only a few intimate friends had not his fortune called him to a high position. He had reached middle age when the call was made on his powers, and when he, not without reflection, answered to the call, and showed himself equal to his task. The power, though not eager for recognition, was in him; he would have expended it in a minor sphere of usefulness had not other wills persuaded him, and induced him to accept high office. There does not appear to have been in him any of the pushing, self-asserting energy so often observable in men who rise in the world. If ever a man was called to great estate when not seeking promotion, he was. He hesitated for some time as to whether he would accept the eminent post of Viceroy and Governor-General of India: once he had decided to labour in that post, he devoted himself to its duties, which, from that time to the last moment of his life, never ceased to be his principal, his absorbing care. In the three years which, after this acceptance, were all that Providence reserved for him, he executed work which, for its mere amount, is surprising, but which, as being the seed, and furnishing the sound programme of what will be occupying hundreds of brains and hands for perhaps generations, is still more remarkable and admirable. Already those acquaint-

ed with the policy of his administration, and the vast scope of his designs, evince an anxiety to secure a just appreciation of them from the public. Each man cognisant of a scheme or a reform projected or commenced, desires that it may be honestly attributed to the mind from which the greatest and most rational conceptions seem for those three years to have emanated. This jealousy for the reputation of the able Viceroy is a tribute not to the officer only but to the man; not merely a sense of justice, but a hearty goodwill speaks in the many accounts given of praiseworthy acts. It is principally from such offerings, being notices of events, or records of State deliberations, that we are able to put together this imperfect memorial. A "Minute," by the Honourable John Strachey, who acted as Governor-General from the death of Lord Mayo until the arrival of Lord Napier at Calcutta, gives a sketch of the Viceroy's administration. A little volume entitled 'In Memoriam,' containing a biographical sketch of his Excellency, and a record of his death and the solemnities which followed, is compiled by Mr. N. A. Chick, and was printed at the City Press in Calcutta. Officials have had a melancholy pleasure in drawing up accounts of scenes, events, and journeys of which they were cognisant. These papers are full of interest, giving points and outlines of a career which, though it may be called unromantic, as meaning that every act of it was prompted by the soundest judgment and far-seeing policy, yet does against the reader's will call up the efforts and large conceptions of heroes who wrought as they did by supernatural aid. The man and the work seem to have been fitted to each other; there was no novitiate, no feeling of the way to command; speedily his mind took in

the whole field of duty, and began to act so vigorously and discreetly as to compel respect and to insure obedience. His previous employment familiarised him with official life and with legislation; but the aptitude for governing was given him by nature. How his earlier days had passed is briefly told in Mr. Chick's small volume; and we shall, no doubt, minister to a generous curiosity in such of our readers as are unacquainted with the leading events of his life, if we mention a few particulars.

The late Lord Mayo was the sixth earl: the family name is Bourke; his Christian names were Richard Southwell. He was born in 1822; took his degree at Trinity College, Dublin; and was elected member for the county Kildare in 1847. Afterwards he sat for the borough of Coleraine, and then for the borough of Cockermouth, which last place he represented when the Viceroyalty of India was offered him. He succeeded to the earldom in 1867, having previously borne the second title of Lord Naas; but, as the title of Mayo belongs to the peerage of Ireland, and he was not a representative peer, he sat in the House of Commons after he became Earl of Mayo. He was three times appointed chief secretary for Ireland—that is to say, every time that the late Lord Derby formed an administration. Twice he performed this duty during the Lieutenancy of Lord Eglinton, whose frank and generous nature harmonised with his, and with whom he maintained the most cordial relations. "No Irishman," writes Mr. Chick, "ever served the country of his birth more conscientiously, more faithfully, with a view to her welfare and happiness, than did Lord Naas. In the House of Commons he was respected by men of all parties, and liked for his genial personal

qualities. No man had more friends on both sides of the House." His exertions to heal the Fenian discontent, and to obtain in Ireland some recognition of the benevolent aims of English rule, were great and meritorious; and the deep interest which he took in the practical working of the Irish and English Land Improvement Acts, is noted by Mr. Strachey as having led to the Land Improvement Act (1871) in India. The post of Irish Secretary is not one in which the conscientious discharge of duty is usually followed by popular applause; but this Irish Secretary's devotion to his work attracted the notice of the chief among his colleagues; and when it fell to the lot of Mr. Disraeli to appoint a successor to Lord Lawrence, he offered the splendid office of Viceroy and Governor-General to the Earl of Mayo. This event is not so old but that we can, without much effort of memory, recall the violent, ungenerous, and unsubstantial objections with which the appointment was greeted. They received a speedy refutation when the great capacity of the Viceroy was developed on his landing in India; and we have no pleasure in dwelling upon attacks so discreditable to those who made them. But the discernment of Mr. Disraeli which caused him to make the selection, and then to adhere to it unflinchingly, is well worthy of remark, more especially as all India seems at this time to refer to it with pride and pleasure; and every one who chronicles an act in the Viceroy's career delights to repeat the prediction of the then Premier, which, peradventure, our readers may not object to see copied on this page: "Upon that nobleman, for his sagacity, for his judgment, fine temper, and knowledge of men, her Majesty has been pleased to confer the office of Viceroy of India; and, as

Viceroy of India, I believe he will earn a reputation that his country will honour, and that he has before him a career which will equal that of the most eminent Governor-General who has preceded him."

Flattering as was the appointment which was offered him, Lord Mayo long debated with himself as to the acceptance of it. He had not been labouring for such a prize. He does not seem to have been ambitious: the call to eminence was sudden: there were many arguments against this change. When, however, he did elect to let greatness come to him, he at once, with his whole heart, devoted himself to the new duty, of the magnitude and importance of which he had formed a true conception—so true a conception that the utterances which he gave at this period seem to have been continually in the minds of Indian officials, as, throughout his Viceroyalty, act after act, labour after labour, attested the sincerity of those early speeches. And now that his work is over, their still lively desire to recur to his words proves how entirely every hope or promise therein held forth has been fulfilled. When taking leave of his constituents at Cockermouth he said, referring to his great appointment:—

"Splendid as is the post, and difficult as will be my duties, I go forth in full confidence, and hope God will give me such strength and wisdom as will enable me to direct the Government of India in the interest and for the welfare of the millions committed to our care. In the performance of the task I ask no favour; let me be judged according to my actions; but I know that efforts honestly made for the maintenance of our national honour, for the spread of civilisation, and the preservation of peace, will always command the sympathy and support of my countrymen."

And in reply to the address of

the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce, he used these words :—

"I can assure you that no man entered upon the office of Governor-General under a deeper sense of responsibility, or a fuller appreciation of the magnitude of the interests which, by the favour of my sovereign, have been committed to my care."

When he thus spoke, Lord Mayo had already begun to act in faithful conformity with his words. His last days at home were spent in perusing, and extracting from, papers at the India Office, preparing an index, as it were of his coming duties, and ascertaining the states of important questions. While on the way to India he began, as Mr. Strachey says, his Indian work. Pausing to examine carefully, in company with M. de Lesseps and Lord Napier of Magdala, the condition of the Suez Canal, then a year from its completion, he was convinced of its approaching success and its immense importance; and in an "admirable letter" he reviewed its state and prospects. From Suez he went to Aden, which, having inspected, he passed on to visit Bombay and Madras. In both those capitals he occupied the time of his visits in making himself acquainted with their public institutions, manufactures, and civil and military administration, communicating at once, wherever he appeared, a deep impression of his energy, of his capacity for business, and of his unwearying application. On the 12th January 1869 he took his seat as Viceroy at Calcutta.

The character of the aspersions cast at the time of his appointment upon the Governor-General by a portion of the English press seems to have been quite understood in India, where no prejudiced opinion awaited

him, and where he was heartily received :—

"He did not belie the expectations formed of him. Nature had given him a tall and commanding presence, a winning manner, and a smile which was a witness to the kindness of his heart. He at once became popular." Moreover, he was the life of Government House. He was able to throw aside anxiety and care for the moment in a marvellous degree, and enter into the minutest pleasures of the household. He was happy in seeing others happy. Blessed with a strong constitution, he was able to bear great bodily and mental fatigue, and he never enjoyed anything more heartily than his long rides and excursions. While these benefited his health, they helped to make him practically acquainted with much that a ruler who keeps to his desk or council-chamber can never learn. He was of opinion that one of the chief duties of a Governor-General was to see things for himself, and not to remain secluded in his chamber, giving judgment on questions with which he was practically unacquainted."†

Himself a zealous sportsman, he encouraged and patronised sport, desiring that official men should, by means of their amusements, be thrown much among the natives, and so acquire a knowledge of the character of the people whom England rules, not for her own selfish ends, but for their benefit. These personal advantages, however, and these tastes, useful as they were as auxiliaries in the performance of duty, were but auxiliaries. The real power lay in his ready and just appreciation of the requirements of India, his bold and vigorous policy for obtaining those requirements, and his indefatigable industry. His early endeavour would appear to have been to justly comprehend the scope and due application of the vast powers which had been con-

* From 'In Memoriam.'

† Ibid.

fided to him; and his strong mind appears to have busied itself at will with all or any of the varied subjects which engross the cares of governments, and the mastery of one or two of which is often a good result after the work of a lifetime. Foreign policy, finance, railway extension, education, military administration, prisons, land revenue, currency, public works, agriculture—these and many other intricate subjects not only received the attention of the Viceroy, but their secrets were so penetrated by him, and their proper objects so comprehended, that he was enabled to form, and he did form and leave on record, very decided opinions in regard to them all. His power of sifting a science or department, and seizing upon its most important points and relations, must have been simply marvellous.

The first two months of his administration were spent in mastering the details of his work, in receiving all classes of the community at Government House, and in visiting every barrack, jail, and institution in and around Calcutta.

The foreign policy of our Indian Government, since it relates to the great questions of peace or war, co-operation or antagonism, progress or retrogression, and so decides the conditions of most other of the sciences of Government, is unquestionably the weightiest subject on which the mind of an Indian ruler can be exercised. Accordingly it is toward foreign policy that we find Lord Mayo first turning; in regard to this he first enounced determinate views. To convey a general statement of what those views were we must borrow, not information only, but the eloquent words in which it is conveyed, from Mr. Strachey:—

"There is no department of the Government of India in which his personal influence was more directly felt,

and none which will be more closely associated in future history with his name, than that which deals with the relations of the British Government with Foreign Powers. From the moment he set foot in India, Lord Mayo threw himself into international and political questions with a vigour, sagacity, and foresight which have left marked effects far beyond the limits of India, and which have influenced the counsels even of that great European Power which shares with England dominion in Asia. The cardinal points of the Foreign policy which, in Lord Mayo's opinion, the Government of India should steadily pursue, may easily be described. He desired to establish with all our frontier States intimate relations of friendship; to make them feel that, though we are all-powerful, we have no desire to encroach on their authority, but, on the contrary, that our earnest desire is to support their power and maintain their nationality. He believed that we could thus create in these States outworks of the Empire, and, assuring them that the days of annexation are past, make them practically feel that they have everything to gain, and nothing to lose, by endeavouring to deserve our favour and support."

It is but doing justice to the British Government of India to say that, from its commencement, conquest and annexation have been resorted to from what was thought to be absolute necessity, not from a persistent desire to extend our dominion and a policy corresponding thereto. It was the inability to bring about in any of the border kingdoms a condition of peace and order favourable to internal prosperity and to commerce which, as we thought, forced us sooner or later in every case to incorporate the unmanageable States with our dominions. It is a startling truth—a truth perhaps unknown to many an honest and upright mind at home—that peace and settled government have been for ages unknown in most of these kingdoms. Wars and revolutions have constituted their his-

tory. It was consequently impossible, while England was but a small power in Hindustan, to remain at rest and follow only the arts and rewards of peace. But now that England has grown powerful in the East, now that not her arms only but her example can command respect, now that she directly sways so great a territory, she is no longer liable to have wars forced on her. But Lord Mayo thought that she could do much more than enjoy her own goods in peace. He thought that, with the influence which she possesses, she might be the means of introducing order and the love of order among the States that touch her border. Could this be done—could we but secure that the countries which bound our empire should be friendly not only to us but to each other—we should be fenced by the most efficient barrier which it is possible for a peace-desiring empire to rejoice in. Conquest and occupation of territory, if they disposed of an old enemy, only brought us up to a new one, more fierce, possibly, and intractable than the enemy we had just subdued. There was no hope of reaching a resting-place as long as we should pursue this course of subjugation. But with quiet neighbours, trusting us and trusted by us, our territory might have rest. None but a great and courageous mind would have undertaken such a scheme as Lord Mayo was engaged in working out before he had been two months in India. He knew the difficulties of it, but he knew also how to set about it, and the order in which results must be achieved. The first step was to convince neighbouring Powers that we had no desire to quarrel with and overrun them. But a belief in our moderation was not easy to instil. For an age we had been seen advancing, sword in

hand, from point to point, from line to line. The nations naturally attributed this advance to a fixed policy of aggression, not to the intolerable perversity of those whose bounds we touched; and the instinct of self-defence, operating under this belief, dictated a constant suspicion of us, and acts more or less hostile when opportunities for them offered. To the rulers of all these countries Lord Mayo proclaimed that annexation was forever at an end: that the wish of England was to see them all prosperous, and at peace with each other. To this end he was ready to assist those who were in alliance with us, to uphold the dignity of their Governments against conspirators and agitators. He exhorted them all to ascertain and fix by consent their boundaries; he established free and friendly communication; and he gave unmistakable proofs of his desire to encourage and develop commerce. Not only did he adopt this policy himself, but he endeavoured to induce the Russian Government to act on their frontier in a similar spirit. It will necessarily be a long time before the results, which the Viceroy saw with the eye of faith, can be realised. What his powerful mind accomplished was the impression on the whole Government of India of the wisdom and feasibility of his designs, and the judicious ordering of the first moves in the execution of this benevolent project. Early in 1869 an opportunity offered of giving proof of the spirit in which Great Britain desired to deal with her neighbours. The Ameer of Afghanistan, after having been for several years harassed by civil war, had at length re-established himself on the throne of Cabul, a success which he owed in great measure to the good offices of England, and to a gift of money and arms bestowed on him by Lord Lawrence, the pre-

decessor of Lord Mayo. As soon as his troubles were sufficiently composed to allow of his absence from his capital, he proposed to pay a visit to the Viceroy, from which all men were to learn that he enjoyed the friendship and protection of Great Britain. Lord Mayo determined to give him the meeting, and to use the opportunity for the furtherance of his peaceful designs. Accordingly he proposed to receive the Ameer at Umballah, and the latter having gladly consented to this arrangement, both Princes proceeded to the *rendezvous*, where they met at the end of March. Sher Ali, the Ameer, had, on coming thither, travelled through the whole extent of the Punjab; he had obtained some insight into the real strength of the British Government; had seen our troops, our railways, our institutions: and he made no secret of the admiration with which they inspired him. The Viceroy, on his part, had travelled a distance of 1154 miles from Calcutta to Umballah, where he gave his guest a kingly reception, the display and magnificence of which were in themselves calculated to make a deep impression on Oriental minds. The principal officers of the British Government, and many native chiefs, were witnesses of the pomp and ceremony which gave *éclat* to this important interview, which did not terminate till the 5th April, when the Ameer returned to his dominions, carrying with him many new ideas likely to affect his policy as well as that of others, and contented with the result of the meeting, although it had not brought him all that he had hoped for. He had cherished an idea that he might be kept regularly in our pay, that our power would be at his call whenever he might require it, and that the support so given would be to him and his line particularly, and not to

the Government *de facto* of Afghanistan. What he did obtain will be best learned from Lord Mayo's word's addressed to him, which we here copy from the "Minute:"—

"I earnestly trust that, on your Highness's return to your own country, you may be enabled speedily to establish your legitimate rule over your entire kingdom, to consolidate your power, to create a firm and a merciful administration in every province of Afghanistan, to promote the interests of commerce, and to secure peace and tranquillity within all your borders.

"Although, as already intimated to you, the British Government does not desire to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, yet, considering that the bonds of friendship between that Government and your Highness have lately been more closely drawn than heretofore, it will view with severe displeasure any attempts on the part of your rivals to disturb your position as ruler of Cabul, and rekindle civil war; and it will further endeavour from time to time, by such means as circumstances may require, to strengthen the Government of your Highness, to enable you to exercise with equity and with justice your rightful rule, and to transmit to your descendants all the dignities and honours of which you are the lawful possessor.

"It is my wish, therefore, that your Highness should communicate frequently and freely with the Government of India and its officers on all subjects of public interest, and I can assure your Highness that any representation which you may make will always be treated with consideration and respect.

"By these means, and by the exercise of mutual confidence, I entertain well-grounded hopes that the most friendly relations between the British Government and that of your Highness may ever be maintained, to the advantage of the subjects, both of her Majesty the Queen and of your Highness."

The present which the Ameer received on the occasion of this visit consisted of a heavy battery of artillery, a mountain train-bat-

tery, and 10,000 stand of arms and accoutrements.

From Umballah the Viceroy proceeded to Seharanpore, Mussoorie, Roorkee, and Hurdloor, then back to Umballah, and on to Simla, a distance of 1560 miles in ten days, this being one of the long journeys for which he afterwards became famous. To the bodily vigour which enabled him to travel as he did, and so to become personally acquainted with so much of India as he from time to time saw, were in great measure due the enlightened opinions which he formed, and the rapidity with which he formed them.

So effectual was the lesson which the Ameer had received, that he immediately on his return set about instituting a policy of watchful defence and abstinence from aggression, and endeavoured to settle his difficulties by diplomatic action in a manner which astonished his own people and excited the admiration of Russia. This reformed policy was of his own voluntary adoption; he received advice and moral support from the British Government, but nothing else. The first effect of the visit was to rouse the suspicion of the Russian press, which, interpreting the Umballah meeting according to the established fashion, circulated rumours of a secret compact to stir up the States on the Oxus to oppose Russia. The Russian Government exhibited an anxiety to be assured that the Ameer would be restrained from molesting the King of Bokhara; but the full exposition of our peaceful policy which was thereupon made proved so satisfactory, that the Emperor himself stated in response that he entertained no intention of extending his dominion; that the peaceful policy of the Ameer would insure the peace of Central Asia; and that

Russia would advise Bokhara to pursue a course equally wise with that which we had recommended to Afghanistan. The good understanding thus begun speedily ripened, and led ere long to the refusal of Russia to countenance different schemes designed to shake the throne of the Ameer, and by that means to disturb the Government of British India. So that the Viceroy was not long before he reaped the fruit of his enlightened policy and proceedings. More than this, the improved relations between Afghanistan and Bokhara (which mean mutual confidence between England and Russia as regards Central Asia) continue to advance; and what was so auspiciously begun by one wise ruler may prove to have been the germ of civilisation to an extensive region of the earth which has been barbarous for centuries.

But it was not with large principalities alone that Lord Mayo had to deal. On the eastern frontier of our empire are settled various savage tribes whose practice appears to have been to make themselves occasionally troublesome by executing border raids. The usual mode of punishing these raids was by retaliatory raids, of the wisdom or efficacy of which Lord Mayo entertained the greatest doubt; and his adverse opinion was afterwards greatly strengthened by the failure of an expedition in 1869, of which the papers before us do not give a particular account. Though by no means holding that invention of border territory was absolutely in all cases to be refrained from, he did maintain that, when it should be necessary to overawe a Government or tribe, a sufficient, well-appointed expedition, guarded by every precaution, and accompanied by every requisite to insure success, should make such an incursion as

would convince the barbarians of their utter inability to resist our power, and how much more to their advantage it would be to enjoy our friendship than to provoke our wrath. Such an expedition he distinguished from a counter-raid reciprocating cruelty and vengeance, effecting no lasting improvement in relations, prolonging feuds, operating only by terror, if it operated even in that way, but not unfrequently ending in the confusion of the raiders, who, unsupported, unprovided, and spurred forward by their courage and revenge, might easily get entangled in the fastnesses and hills of the enemy. Invading expeditions, if made at all, were not to retire leaving things as they found them, but to establish friendly relations, to exact promises that our native agents should from time to time be received in the villages, to insure the safety of travellers in the districts, and to show the advantages of trade and commerce. But the necessity of making invasions might to a very great extent, Lord Mayo thought, be avoided by our pursuing a border policy of watchful defence, by giving to our officers on the spot power to punish promptly border marauders, by suppressing every practice that could be reasonably looked on as provocation, by encouraging the tribes to come to us and represent their grievances, and by insisting upon our representatives cultivating the acquaintance, and if possible acquiring the confidence, of the natives beyond our limits. Besides the general arguments in defence of his views, the Viceroy used special reasons derived from the peculiarity of our position in India, which he thought decisive of the question. As these ought not to be abridged, we give them in Mr. Strachey's own words:—

"Lord Mayo felt that every shot fired in anger beyond the frontier reverberates through the whole of Asia, gives to natives who are no friends to Christian or European rule the notion that among our own subjects there are men still in arms against us, and corroborates the assertion that the people within our frontier are not yet wholly subjected to our rule, and that British power is still disputed in Hindustan. Our proceedings and movements are caught up and criticised at every Court in Asia, at Mandalay, Yarkund, Bokhara, and even at St. Petersburg. Every frontier war that is not justified by absolute and demonstrable necessity gives a direct lie to all the assurances that we have been giving to Cabul and Russia for the last three years; renders nugatory the advice which we have been giving to the Ameer of Afghanistan and other Powers to abstain from aggressions on their neighbours; and tends to undo the policy of peace, the acceptance of which Lord Mayo did so much to secure in the countries beyond our borders. He felt that it was a bad example to set to our great European neighbour; that the arguments used in favour of such expeditions were precisely the arguments which had justified the Russian annexations in Central Asia; that we never can arrive at a common understanding with Russia unless we ourselves scrupulously abstain from such acts; and that the sacrifice of a policy calculated to give at least the hope of some measure of peace to a quarter of the globe, and confidence to all neighbouring powers in the integrity and disinterestedness of our intentions, was too great a price to pay for the punishment of a few naked savages."

In pursuance of the views above explained, Lord Mayo dealt with the Mohammed Kheyls, a border tribe, so as to be rewarded with brilliant and complete success. After fifteen months of outlawry and defiance, "the whole tribe surrendered unconditionally in October last, and with bare heads, and with turban cloth stretched over their bonded necks in token of submission, placed their arms at the Commissioner's

feet." This act was followed up by others showing that the submission was sincere and thorough.

It is clear at a glance that such a policy as has been here sketched, reasonable and enlightened as it is seen to be when propounded, requires minds of the very first order to carry it into effect. To Lord Mayo, and such vigorous rulers as he, the problem is practicable; but what immense discrimination is required to determine the exact line between damaging weakness and politic forbearance; to perceive in what cases terror, and in what cases generosity, will most affect the barbarous mind; what a lengthened and clear ken must that be which, looking beyond the immediate case and cause of quarrel, can perceive how to act so as not only to obtain local results, but to impress distant and powerful nations with convictions favourable to our general aims! Only recently we have heard of an exercise of their discretionary power by our frontier officers which demonstrates that such power cannot safely be intrusted, as a rule, even to experienced hands. It is, however, a patriotic act of Mr. Strachey, as well as an act of justice to the deceased Governor-General, to put on record, while they are yet fresh in the recollections of many, these views of a most able ruler.

The finances of India were, on the arrival of Lord Mayo, in a very unsatisfactory state. He at once took measures for remedying the evils that immediately pressed; and, after profoundly considering the great questions of expenditure and revenue, he inaugurated a policy calculated to preserve financial equilibrium in time to come, and to render impossible in the future such

an untoward state of affairs as he found at the commencement of his Viceroyalty. Of course there are in India, as in other countries, Ministers and other officials, high and low, whose duties belong wholly to the finances. We know, too, that the Governor-General is not an autocrat, that his responsibilities are shared by a most efficient Council, and that the thoughts of many brains go to make up the designs which at last come into operation as the laws and ordinances of the State. This considered, it might seem fair to object to our observations this remark, that the Viceroy is but one of many to whose sagacity good government is due, and that provided he has efficient counsellors, and sense enough to be guided by their advice, he may achieve success on easy terms. But in the papers before us, especial care is taken to show where the principal honour is due. The financial measures and the financial reforms were Lord Mayo's own; and that they were so is said to be well known "to all who had the honour of taking part in his administration." Expressions like this, often recurring in the writings, prove not only how willingly the chief credit was conceded to the Viceroy, but how general is the desire that all should know his great deserts.

The condition of Indian finance at the time of Lord Mayo's appointment was as follows: The deficit of the preceding three years amounted to £8,300,000; the cash balances had been reduced from £13,800,000 to £10,200,000; the public debt had been increased by £5,900,000, besides the sum of £2,200,000 railway capital received in excess of the amount expended.* The year

* Mere figures without considerable explanations cannot, Mr. Strachey reminds us, convey a very exact idea of the state of things. Part of the deficit was nominal, part was due to the extraordinary expenses of the Abyssinian war. In the text it is sought to give no more than a general notion by round numbers.

1868-69 closed with a deficit of £4,100,000. The expected deficit on 1869-70 was £1,750,000. But in the autumn of 1869 measures were taken, "under the close personal inspection of Lord Mayo," to arrest the evil before it had become ruinous. Additional taxes were imposed; but, at the same time, immense reductions of expenditure were ordered. This was the turning-point. The finances of 1869-70 were improved by more than £1,700,000; and for the three years of Lord Mayo's government the surplus on the ordinary account amounted to £4,800,000, this result having been obtained without any serious permanent addition to the burdens of the people.

What kinds of reductions it was thought most desirable to make for permanently keeping down the expenditure we shall give some idea of when we say a few words under the heads of Communications, Military Administration, Public Works, and so forth. In the mean time, the celerity with which the Viceroy had mastered this finance difficulty may be judged of from the concluding paragraphs, "added by his own hand," to a despatch from the Government of India to the Secretary of State, dated 20th September 1869:—

"We have described to your Grace the dangers and difficulties which, in our opinion, surround our present position. We must, however, in conclusion, assure your Grace that, notwithstanding the somewhat gloomy picture we have been obliged to draw, the general aspect of affairs inspires us with the fullest confidence in the future prosperity of India. We entertain no apprehension of foreign invasion or domestic disturbance. For all purposes of defences, and for the preservation of peace, our military and police organisations are strong and efficient. The splendid revenue of the empire is contributed by a population which, compared with that of other countries, is lightly taxed. As was proved by

the success of our late loan, the credit of India never stood higher. The enriching and civilising effects of the great railway and irrigation works which have within the last twenty years been constructed, are beginning to be felt throughout the length and breadth of the land. By the blessing of Providence, with the seasonable and plentiful rainfall of the last few weeks, all danger of famine, and of the continuance of the late severe distress, has passed away. The steady rise which has taken place in the value of labour must ere long materially increase the wealth and contentment of the people. With us then it rests, by careful administration, and by a strict adherence to those simple rules of prudence and economy which, in the conduct of affairs alike of nations and individuals, are indispensable to the attainment of safety and success, to use to the utmost extent, for the benefit of the people, the mighty resources of this great empire."

This is the right place to mention the completeness with which Lord Mayo overlooked the pecuniary difficulties of the country. He had planned in 1869 a magnificent reception of H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh at Agra. All the chiefs of India were summoned to what was intended to be an unusually grand and impressive durbar. But when the heavy deficit was ascertained, thought of the burdens which would be thrown upon the people by the marches of retinues and armies through the districts, induced him to abandon this attractive design, and to receive H.R.H. at Calcutta. Here the reception was most nobly and splendidly carried out; the Governors of Madras and Bombay, the principal British officials in India, and some of the native chiefs and nobles, contributed by their presence to the grandeur of the entertainments. The gorgeous displays rivalled the Oriental splendours of other days; but the private purse of his Excellency the Viceroy bore as much as possible of the expense.

He spent on this occasion upwards of a lac of rupees, which sum the Supreme Council unanimously desired to repay, but Lord Mayo declined to be reimbursed. Thus his liberality, always remarkable, was not thoughtless, but wisely and considerably applied, and exercised, as all his talents were, for the general good.

Before Lord Mayo's Viceroyalty, the finances of India were worked wholly by the supreme Government. They spent money in the provinces, but it was provided at Calcutta. Local Governments made their demands, obtained what grants they could, spent what they got, and more too, yet were still dissatisfied. They were in nowise responsible for the maintenance of any proportion between the contributions and the expenses of the provinces. All that was done for them. So there was a sort of scramble for money, in which not those provinces which wanted it most, but those which most speciously or importunately put forward their demands, often succeeded best. The sagacity of Lord Mayo perceived that this system was answerable for a great deal of the financial difficulties. He decided that the local Governments should be made to feel responsibility for what they might propose, and for maintaining a just balance between the outlay of each province and the share of the general revenue which it might fairly claim to use. He ascertained and declared what in each case that share of the general revenue could be, and then held the local powers answerable for not exceeding this grant (which would be almost a fixed sum for many years), and for applying it so as to meet most effectually the local requirements. All at once the provincial Governments found that, instead of having a purse of apparently unlimited depth to draw on, they

were each confined to a certain expenditure. They had to look about them to observe in what way the annual grants could be most advantageously applied; and they woke up to the necessity of making the grants go as far as possible—a problem with which, probably, they had hitherto never troubled themselves much. The new plan had the best possible effect, and will, no doubt, bear much better fruit than it has borne as yet. "The honour of practically inaugurating it belongs to Lord Mayo, and it will remain one of the most important monuments of his administration."

The increase of the public debt—which in these days of progress cannot altogether be avoided—ought, in Lord Mayo's opinion, to be permitted only after most careful circumspection. State railways, the most fruitful causes of borrowing, should never, he thought, be undertaken at all, unless it can be shown that they will be speedily remunerative. That this condition might be the more easily fulfilled, he advocated a narrow gauge, and every severity of design calculated to keep down the prime cost. As long as any debt should remain, he would have kept the accounts of the undertaking altogether separate from the ordinary annual accounts, and would have applied all profits to the liquidation of the debt, and allowed them to be applicable to no other purpose whatever. Works of irrigation, which he knew to be indispensable if there were to be any safeguard against constantly-recurring famines, he wished to be made chargeable to the districts which they were to benefit, and not to general revenue. "As a matter of principle, the people of Madras should not pay for the enrichment of the Punjab, nor the people of Bengal for the irrigation of Sindh." These views of his

with regard to loans have, however, not yet been put in practice; they are part of the large legacy of profound and far-stretching thought which he has left for succeeding legislators to make the most of.

In the construction of railways the Viceroy introduced changes which made the cost of a mile £5000, where it had been, according to the older plans, £17,000. Though he would have dispensed with railways rather than have incautiously loaded the State with debt, yet the interest which he took in railway extension and construction was very lively. One of his rapid journeys, which astonished natives and Anglo-Indians alike, was undertaken in the spring of 1870 to open the Khangaoon Cotton Branch Railway and the line between Calcutta and Bombay. To accomplish this he travelled 2600 miles in a fortnight, and only part of it by rail. The former of these lines was the first constructed by the State without the intervention of a company. It had been pushed forward with extraordinary vigour, and was opened in less than ten months after the Government decided upon making it. In December of the same year the Viceroy opened the Goolunda extension of the Eastern Bengal Railway. His ideas of a system of Indian railways were, like all his other ideas, well thought out, clear, and decided. His attention and personal exertions were expended in projecting and pushing forward works of irrigation as much as railways—indeed, he seemed to attach more importance to the canals than to the lines. Many grand works at this day in progress all over India are witnesses of his zeal in this direction.

During the three years of his rule, Lord Mayo reduced the military charges by about half a million, without appreciably altering the

strength in men and guns. In the same period factories for ammunition for the modern rifles have been established; and the rifles themselves—breech-loaders for the British and muzzle-loaders for the native troops—have been everywhere supplied. A camp of instruction was held in 1871, and camps are intended to be hereafter held periodically. By building cottage-barracks in the hills, instead of the expensive permanent barracks which it had been intended to erect, a considerable saving was effected; but the construction of the costlier class had proceeded so far before the reform began, that there remained but few stations at which the cheaper sort could be built. One brigade and five batteries of horse-artillery, with thirty guns, and a brigade and three batteries of garrison artillery, were reduced. But this does not mean that the number of gunners was reduced. The men, according to the former arrangement, had been too much spread out, so that the guns were undermanned. By reducing the number of guns and increasing the strength in men of each battery, the artillery was rendered more efficient, and the number of guns retained was still ample in proportion to other armies to fulfil the requirements of the severest tacticians. Sanitary measures for the army were a special care of Lord Mayo. For procuring healthy cantonments, establishing lock-hospitals, insuring a pure water supply, he grudged no expense, seeing, as such a man must have seen, that to kill poor soldiers for want of sanitary precautions is one of the most expensive and barbarous of economies.

It was the fixed opinion of Lord Mayo that a reduction in the native army might be effected without hazard; but he failed to convince

others of the expediency of making this change, and nothing was done in that direction. The opinion, however, of so wise a man remains as ground for consideration to succeeding administrators.

"Other military reforms had received much of his attention. He regarded it as an anomaly to have divided authority and control in what is practically one army, and he believed it to be inexpedient to maintain triple establishments where one would suffice. Up to the time of his death he was revolving measures for the improvement of the Stud and Ordnance Departments, and for enabling the Lawrence Asylums in the hills, those excellent institutions for the education of the children of British soldiers, to fulfil more adequately the design of their founder; and it was within a few days only of his death that the eminent officers whom he had caused to be sent from England for the purpose, submitted their proposals on the means to be taken to render our ports secure from insult, and for supplying the marine requirements of the country."

Arriving with the problems of the land question in Ireland still fresh in his mind, Lord Mayo had but little trouble in comprehending the difficulties—strictly analogous in many respects to those of Ireland—which beset the land question in India. He learned we are told, in three years, more about settlements of lands, zemindaree and ryotwaree systems, and tenant and occupancy rights, than most men acquire in a lifetime. He combated with all the force of his mind the scheme of extending to other parts of India such a settlement of the land revenue as exists in Bengal, where, as he believed, we have thrown away an immense income, and thereby made it necessary to impose heavy burdens on the whole country without conferring any real benefit. He was in favour of an assessment on the land fixed at a certain proportion to the produce, instead of being permanent-

ly fixed at a constant sum of money. This plan will probably be carried into effect, and its adoption will be due to the strong and cordial support which it received from Lord Mayo, although the origination of the great measures of local taxation in Bengal is due to Lord Lawrence and the Duke of Argyll. Yet under the auspices of Lord Mayo the great principle was at length laid down, that works, large or small, for the benefit of a particular province, must be carried out at the expense of that province. It was his endeavour that in carrying out these local improvements the natives of the country should be associated as much as possible with the officers of the Government; and he took every occasion of urging that they should be encouraged to take an active part in the management of their own local affairs. Nine-tenths of the whole population depend for their livelihood upon the land. It follows, therefore, that upon the healthy condition of agriculture must depend both national progress and national prosperity. Yet plain as this truth is, and many as have been the able men who have acknowledged it, "Lord Mayo was the first to give it distinct utterance and to act upon it." Besides agriculture proper, the improvement of the breeds of cattle and horses, the reorganisation of studs, the diffusion of veterinary knowledge, the ascertaining of the causes of cattle plagues and the application of remedies, the establishment of model farms and agricultural schools and colleges throughout the country, were subjects which he studied not to gratify enthusiastic fancies, but to work out sound practical results.

An act to extend and regulate the system of giving advances of public money to landlords and tenants for minor improvements which can be carried out without the assistance of

the engineer, and without a large outlay, became law in 1871. It was framed under the Viceroy's own instructions, and considered by him in all its details. A similar measure for making loans to municipalities, and other public bodies, was passed about the same time, its object being to give to the neglected cities of India benefits as great as those which were anticipated from the advances for agricultural purposes. The measures to be taken under these acts were under consideration when Lord Mayo died. He saw little or nothing of the effects of his great measures, "but the time will come when the benefits of the work which he inaugurated will be a lasting memorial in his honour."

The diffusion of useful knowledge was a subject which the Viceroy had much at heart, and over which he had pondered deeply. Of course, a very great deal had been accomplished in promoting education before his time, and before the time of his predecessor, Lord Lawrence. But the medium through which information was conveyed was, for the most part, the English language; and although Lord Mayo entirely approved of the higher branches of science being taught in English, he was convinced at the same time that the ignorance of the masses could never be reached unless elementary information were conveyed to them in their native tongues. A system of education had, it seems, been willingly adopted by the Hindus; but this system was not at all agreeable to the Mohammedans. To promote the enlightenment of the latter became therefore a leading desire of the Governor-General, who felt the necessity of developing low-class education, and of providing means for its support—also of encouraging a vernacular literature. With a view to many great results, and among them to the establishment of a col-

lege for the education of the sons of the chiefs and nobles at Ajmere, he performed one of his long and rapid journeys, extending over more than 2000 miles, and involving great exertion and exposure. At Ajmere he held, on 22d October 1870, a great durbar, which was attended by very many native chiefs and nobles. From his speech to them, which breathed goodwill and good advice, we extract the remarks which refer to education.

"And now let me mention a project which I have much at heart. I desire much to invite your assistance to enable me to establish at Ajmere a school or college which should be devoted exclusively to the education of the sons of the chiefs, princes, and leading Thakours of Rajpootana. It should be an institution suited to the position and rank of the boys for whose instruction it is intended, and such a system of teaching should be founded as would be best calculated to fit them for the important duties which in after-life they would be called upon to discharge. It would not be possible on this occasion to describe minutely the different features of such an institution, but I hope to communicate with you shortly on the subject; and I trust you will favour and support an attempt to give to the youth of Rajpootana instruction suitable to their high birth and position.

"Be assured that we ask you to do all this for no other but your own benefit. If we wished you to remain weak, we should say, 'Be poor, and ignorant, and disorderly.' It is because we wish you to be strong that we desire to see you rich, instructed, and well governed. It is for such objects that the servants of the Queen rule in India; and Providence will ever sustain the rulers who govern for the people's good."

It was the good fortune of Lord Mayo to be assisted by a most efficient Council. It was his gift to be able to appreciate the services of its members, and so to support each in getting through meritorious work.

Sir Henry Maine first, and then Mr. Stephen, was responsible for the business of legislation; by their exertions a great number of important Acts were passed, but not with a view to increase the bulk of the laws. The object of them was rather to condense and codify the confused mass of old Regulations and Acts, to repeal old enactments, to put the whole code into order, and to make it clear and unmistakable. In effect, the number of the laws was reduced by three or four hundred, and the consolidation of them was as perfect as in any civilised country in the world. The Hindu and Mohammedan laws we can, of course, scarcely modify at all; but the law of British India has been brought into a very satisfactory state; and although the Viceroy was concerned but little with details, he was always ready to take an active part in the discussion of principles.

Devotion to the important work of government did not prevent Lord Mayo from making efforts, wherever practicable, for the advancement of literature and art. A new department of archæology was established, and a scheme carefully devised for the preservation and collection of ancient manuscripts. Gazetteers also are in progress for almost every part of British India. These will one day be combined into a great and comprehensive work, containing general and particular information of the very first importance regarding our empire in the East.

In short, whether at his desk or in the saddle the Viceroy appears to have been perpetually at work. In the short intervals of a journey, he is seen always holding *darbars*, inspecting works or buildings, or giving audiences. After a harassing season at Calcutta, we see him ready to start on a most fatiguing tour of incredible length. Nothing

seemed to exhaust his energy of mind or body—neither fatigue, heat, nor a rude mode of travelling operated as a bar to his activity. In one year, on purely official journeys, he travelled over more than 9000 miles of ground. "He had seen more of India in the three years since he became Viceroy, than any man that I have known has seen of it in his life. There was hardly an important province that he had not visited, or a man of mark that he did not know."

Jail discipline was a subject in which Lord Mayo took especial interest. He had been a steady supporter of the Irish system of treating convicts, and he possessed experience which might be turned to excellent account in punishing criminals in the East. He desired to establish prisons in the hills for Europeans, to utilise convict labour in outdoor work, and to modify the system of punishments and rewards. It was with a view to rendering the penal settlement at Port Blair, in the Andaman Isles, more effective and more economical, that he was induced to visit that colony, and to make the last official excursion in what had already become a very remarkable career.

The condition of the penal settlement certainly required to be investigated. Much fault had been found with the establishment, officially and unofficially; but the two principal imputed defects, though both very grave indeed, appear at first view to contradict each other. The one is, that the lawless beings who were confined there found their punishment intolerable; that they would have preferred death, and therefore had no regard for life; and that their minds were filled with gloomy thoughts of revenge. The other is, that discipline was lax; that the convicts were unrestrained in certain ways not at all usual in

prisons; and that they had it in their power to procure deadly weapons and intoxicating liquors; also, that some of them gave entertainments to their fellow-prisoners. As to a very extraordinary licence having existed there can be no doubt. On some of the Islands the prisoners appear to have been at liberty to roam about at certain times even when not in possession of tickets-of-leave; they had opportunities of plotting together; and it was even possible for them to be to a great extent at large after dark. But perhaps a short reflection on the kind of laxity which prevailed will bring with it the conviction that it was not calculated to assuage the miseries of confinement and forced labour. The convicts were, many of them semi-savages of wild lawless natures, to whom deprivation of liberty was in itself a death, and whose sense of the loss of their wild freedom would be only aggravated by talking over their fancied wrongs, and stimulating each other to vengeance. Indulgence in strong liquors would only tend to make wild passion ungovernable. We do not gather from any of the accounts that judicious measures were taken for taming these fierce spirits, for bringing them to admit that their sentences were deserved, or for inducing them to seek for alleviation of their sentences through submission and reformation of mind. Thus it is probable that the complaints—of the desperate state of mind of the prisoners, and of the imperfect discipline—were well founded. Lord Mayo desired to inspect the place personally, not only as a duty which he owed to the public, but with the merciful intent of mitigating, if necessary and practicable, the horrors which were said to turn a convict's mind into a hell.

Accordingly, on the 24th of last

January, the Viceroy, accompanied by the Countess of Mayo and by his staff, left Calcutta in H.M. steam-frigate *Glasgow* to visit British Burmah and the Andaman Islands. Those who have made it a labour of respect and love to note the last incidents of a life which to them was a great example, dwell mournfully on certain remarks made during this voyage by Lord Mayo concerning the dangers encountered by officials in India who are much in the way of the native population. Either in reference to the recent assassination of Mr. Justice Norman, or in reply to advices urging himself to caution, he exclaimed, "I do not believe that any precaution will prevail against a determined attempt to assassinate." It is probable, however, that Lord Mayo, like many another bold and great man, unconscious of apprehension and abhorring the feeling of distrust, was too impatient of cumbrous retinues and of the appearance of insecurity which attended them. Certain it is that he dispensed with many precautions which great officials, both civil and military, had thought it their duty to observe. A letter of remonstrance, to which the greatest interest now attaches, is lying before us as we write. It was addressed in September last to the Governor-General by an officer of rank at Simla, and it points out with much force the propriety—nay, the absolute duty—of being more effectually guarded on certain occasions. Lord Dalhousie (so it says), Lord Canning, Sir Charles Napier, and Lord Lawrence—all of them men of undoubted courage, did not disdain the employment of a body-guard nor other precautions; and the sad death of Mr. Justice Norman, who had been singled out for destruction, was a warning that such provisions ought to be resumed. As if the writer had heard before expressed the Viceroy's

remark concerning the uselessness of attempting to guard against a determined assassin, he argues this point, and sets forth that, although caution may possibly not avail against a murderer determined to execute his purpose at *any* cost, yet that there are very few who are so determined, and to whom the opportunity of committing their crime easily, and of escaping after, might not be a condition of their making the attempt to kill. The personal staff, fully alive to the risk, seem on all occasions, not excepting that which led to the Viceroy's death, to have done all in their power to detect and ward off danger, but it was decreed that their charge should die. Of equal interest with the above documents are some note-sheets, which we have just perused, relating to the very last work which Lord Mayo did. Among them are "Questions to be asked at Rangoon;" and these are about provisions for the troops, Australian meat, possibility of growing potatoes, contracts for rum, milk for hospital, issues of barrack furniture, and price of elephants. "Questions for Colonel ——" have reference to agriculture and road-making. "Questions for District Officers" concern the consumption of opium. And "Notes on Port Blair" are marked for Agricultural Department, and refer to military command, prosecution of reclamation of ground by convicts in place of building, drainage, use of bricks instead of stone for building as being cheaper, buildings of jungle timber to be used for the present, inquiries about a steamer and steam-barge. These notes are in the Earl's own handwriting, and those on Port Blair would appear to have been made only an hour or two before his death. He was enthusiastically received at Rangoon and Moulmein, "where every moment of the day was spent in holding

durbars, receiving native gentlemen, visiting institutions, looking at sites for railways and places for fortifications, speaking encouraging words to deputations, and giving new life to the province."

On the 8th February the Viceroy arrived at Port Blair, where he landed and spent the morning in making inspections, after which he returned on board. After noon he landed again and made further inspections, which occupied him till five o'clock. It then became a question whether he would ascend a height named Mount Harriet, above Hopetown, whence there was a magnificent view of the Andaman group. Fatiguing as had been the work of the day, Lord Mayo determined that he would mount the hill, which is 1153 feet high. A solitary pony was procured for his Excellency's accommodation, who, however, made much objection to riding up while his attendants went on foot. The ascent was soon accomplished, and the party rested until sundown in a summer-house on the top, enjoying the fine evening and the charming panorama. All the way up, the murderer, hidden among the bushes, had travelled side by side with his victim, seeking an opportunity, which did not at that time occur, of executing his fell design. How it was possible for a convict at his own pleasure to separate himself from his fellow-prisoners and go up Mount Harriet, we have not seen explained; but there is no doubt that the assassin did so, notwithstanding that he was already a convicted murderer, and had been sent to the settlement to expiate the crime of destroying one of his countrymen in pursuance of a family feud of long standing. An Afghan by birth, his name was Sher Ali: his former crime having been committed within the British border, he was tried and punished for it;

but as these feuds, and the bloody deeds to which they lead, are looked upon as venial, and indeed reasonable, by his race, his sentence had long rankled in his fierce mind. On hearing that the Governor-General was at the settlement, he resolved to kill him, and exerted his naturally keen powers of observation in discovering which of the party was the nobleman whom he had devoted to death. The night fell while the visitors descended the hill. Torches had been lighted, and the Governor-General, having descended to the shore, was being escorted along a small jetty to where a steam-launch lay ready to take him off to the ship. Two of the staff were waiting on the pier-head; Lord Mayo, preceded by torch-bearers, and closely attended by his private secretary, and followed at a distance of about fifteen yards by two other officers, was proceeding along the jetty; the escort of eight policemen was following in rear, his Excellency having walked ahead of them now that the jetty had been reached and the party was about to embark. This was the opportunity which Sher Ali seized for accomplishing his horrid purpose. Gliding, undistinguished in the darkness, along the pier, he passed the escort and the officers who followed behind the Viceroy; then, leaping like a tiger on to Lord Mayo's back, he stabbed him in two places, either wound being sufficient to cause death. Some confusion, of course, ensued, but it was only momentary. The lights, or some of them, were extinguished, the murderer was seized and secured, but the wounded Earl of Mayo either fell or threw himself over the pier

into the water, which was there about two feet deep. He was there observed standing up, with the manner of one collecting himself after a fall, and brushing the hair out of his eyes; at the same time he was heard to say, "It is all right," or some reassuring words. But to Major Burne, his secretary, who ran to help him out of the water, he said simply, "Burne, they have hit me." He was then placed on a truck in a sitting position, but fell back apparently in great pain. Attempts were made to stanch the bleeding, and then, after a very short consultation, it was resolved to carry him to the boat, and take him on board the Glasgow. While being borne to the launch he murmured something which was understood to be, "Lift up my head," and these were his last words. It is believed that he died while he was being placed in the boat; but nevertheless he was held in a sitting position; his clothes were cut off that the bleeding might be more effectually stopped, and his legs and feet were chafed. By the time the launch reached the Glasgow all doubt was at an end. Lord Mayo was dead.

Major Burne, Lord Mayo's faithful private secretary, was by his side in his last moments. The Viceroy was warmly attached to this officer, who had laboured with him and for him incessantly, enjoyed his confidence, shared his anxieties, and was his companion in hours of relaxation. It is hoped that the sufferer was conscious of the attentions of this devoted friend; and it is a source of satisfaction to his bereaved relatives that Major Burne was near to witness his last sigh.*

* Mr. Strachey, writing of Major Burne in his 'Minute,' says, "He was not only the best private secretary that I ever saw or heard of, but during the last three years he has performed with great ability and rare discretion, as confidential assistant of the Viceroy, a greater amount of public business, of a most difficult and delicate kind, than has fallen to many men in India. I sincerely trust that his services may be recognised as they deserve."

Thus it pleased Providence that a valuable life should be cut short while its labours were in the flood, but were far from reaching their height. Yet, though the martyred Viceroy knew chiefly the toils and anxieties of seed-time, without being permitted to see the harvest—though his career in India was brief in respect of time—his work was not the less effectually done. If to give a new stimulus to the life of Government in all its departments—if to think out and initiate great and benevolent designs—if to set an example worthy of imitation by rulers in all time be meritorious, then Lord Mayo has earned a place in history as a most illustrious servant of the Crown. His achievement must not be measured by days. The brief period of his greatest usefulness was so rich and fruitful as to have been more productive than many a long and useful life. He designed so much and so well that to execute thoroughly all that he showed to be right and practicable will employ generations. As it is said of some of the world's greatest authors that they have so condensed thought, and so accumulated wit and portraiture, that a page from their works may furnish matter for the volume of one less gifted; so we may say of Lord Mayo's work, that

every subdivision of it will expand so as to employ hundreds of those whom he has left behind, or who are yet to be born. He began a new era in Indian history; his spirit must be felt there for many a year to come; he being dead will yet speak, and be powerful for wise and beneficent government. Men, thoroughly impressed by his superior mind, and convinced of the soundness of the great principles which he put forth, seem to have bound themselves to follow out those principles as determinedly as if they had solemnly made oath on the cross of his sword. There can be no doubt that the work of this one man will one day prove a blessing to millions. It was his fate to labour; other men will enter into his labours. In this world there was no reward for him beyond the consciousness that he was doing his duty. If there were no world but this, such a lot would be enough to paralyse exertion, and to make all careless about well-doing; but men such as he whom we have been contemplating do not look for their meed here; his cruel death will not undo the great influence of his life; generous minds will admire and strive to imitate him, looking not to what he suffered, but to the enduring service which he was enabled to do.

THE LAST MONTH OF THE SESSION.

THE just ideas and the liberal feeling which prevailed on both sides of the Atlantic in regard to the Indirect Claims, deserved a better fate than to be frustrated and disappointed through the incapacity and the obstinacy of Governments. To the arbitrators' clear perception of the situation, and to their prompt and judicious action, extra-official though it was, we owe an escape from difficulty and danger, and an opening of the way to future good, for which neither nation can be too thankful. Fairly to estimate our debt to the arbitrators, we have need to look back to our prospects at the beginning of the last week in June. At that time, the only resource of our helpless Ministry was to petition the arbitrators to take a step which they, probably, were not empowered to take—namely, to adjourn at the instance of one party to the arbitration, and in spite of the protest of the other party, so as to give time for further discussion of great questions, without the settlement of which the arbitration could not proceed. The only hope of this nation was that the arbitrators, refusing compliance with the request of the English Cabinet, would declare their functions for the present at an end. We saw but too plainly what the dangers of postponement were. Lapse of time and the renewal of disputes were alone likely to generate acrimonious recriminations and collateral disagreements; but when we reflected that the period over which the postponement was to have extended will be occupied by the Americans in their Presidential election and the proceedings incident thereto, we saw that a bitter quarrel was to be apprehended.

The arbitrators' sensible notice of the Indirect Claims at once made a way of escape from an embarrassment which, if we had been served by capable men, we could never have been involved in. Once more, thanks to these arbitrators, we may indulge the hope that England and America, hand in hand, will ere long follow after the great aims which together they may be able to achieve for the benefit of themselves and other nations.

There is, however, a grave truth in connection with this matter which we should be unwise to overlook in the joy of our deliverance—namely, that the deliverance, great as it is, is merely the undoing of immense mischief, which we incurred through the negligence and incapacity of our Ministers, and the commissioners whom they employed. The event, although, thanks to the arbitrators, it is an inestimable relief to us, does not in the slightest degree decrease the culpability of the Administration in neglecting the interests of the country at the time when the treaty was made. The Government is as much amenable to judgment for *crassa negligentia* as it would have been if the arbitrators had separated without considering the case at all, as a month ago they seemed likely to do. The exasperation of the country will not, of course, be the same as if the Treaty had altogether failed, but its impartial judgment must be the same as if the worst had occurred. Why should Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues benefit by the spontaneous action of the arbitrators? Why should we forgive the unnecessary peril in which we were placed because by a different agency we were

delivered from it? Be it remembered that it was not one blunder only which we had to complain of, but a series of blunders, every convulsive wriggle after the first entanglement having made our case only more hopeless and our position more contemptible. The long-delayed "friendly communication," the miserable Supplementary Treaty, the telegraphic blunderings, and, finally, the petition for adjournment, were all evidences of incapacity, concerning which the country was not slow to express its opinion at the time when they became known. It will surely call the authors to account, now that the dispute approaches a solution. If Mr. Gladstone did not succeed in actually plunging us in enormous difficulties, he kept us for months continually on the brink of them; while some good angel, counteracting his folly again and again, withheld us from a fall. It must puzzle Mr. Gladstone as much as it does us to divine how, after such repeated stumbles, he was prevented from precipitating us. Possibly his convictions just now incline towards a belief in a Genius of Great Britain superior to all accident, or in some corrective spirit sent into the world at the same time as himself to follow his footsteps and keep guard over his most imbecile acts, that they may not ruin us. Certain it is that by his presumption we might readily have been brought into serious trouble; equally certain is it that whenever the bolt seemed about to fall, some unexpected agent interposed and averted the blow. Sir John Falstaff, repeatedly balked in his endeavours to transgress the commandments, remarks in a sort of despair of doing mischief, "I believe the devil would not have me damned lest the oil that is in me should set hell on fire." We feel certain that

Mr. Gladstone has not expressed himself in this profane way, but he must be astonished to see that there is some influence, more powerful than his perversity, which steps in to our aid just as he seems to be getting things beyond retrieval. But there is an old proverb which shows that a pitcher, though it goes often to the well, will get broken at last; and so Mr. Gladstone, though we are as yet in whole skin, may succeed in damaging us if we learn nothing from the scrapes into which he has led us. If they prove anything, they prove that he is an utterly unsafe guide, and that if we neglect the warnings we have had we shall have only ourselves to thank for any future adversity that may come upon us through his means.

The work of legislation, as it is but too commonly the case nowadays, as been allowed to accumulate to the end of the session; and Ministers, knowing well how to use the impatience of a worn-out Parliament, have been putting some clumsy work past almost unobserved. Mr. Cardwell, with a most unsatisfactory explanation, or rather with no real explanation at all, was allowed to tide over the omission to show fairly in the Army Estimates the promotions which he proposed to make in the Artillery and Engineers, and the expenses of them in detail. The excuse given to the House was, that the promotions not having been authorised by Royal Warrant at the time when the Estimates were framed, could not be shown in these documents. But what have Royal Warrants to do with Estimates? Everything in the annual Estimates is alike unauthorised when the documents are printed. They are simply, or rather they should be simply, clear and detailed expositions of the different charges which Parliament is to be asked to grant

for the service of the year; and Parliament is not properly treated if every vote intended to be taken is not there clearly shown. The fact of the Warrant not having been signed had nothing to do with Parliament granting the money. The Minister can always procure a Royal Warrant. There could be no doubt, therefore, that when parliament should allow the money, the Warrant would certainly follow. Thus the reason given for withholding the information is absurd. For some reason the Minister thought proper to smuggle this charge through the House of Commons in a lump sum and under a general head, instead of in separate charges against the corps and ranks proposed to be augmented or instituted. But the proceeding is most objectionable, and should not have been allowed to pass with so slight notice as it received.

We presume that Mr. Cardwell intends to raise immediately the sum of three and a half millions for purchase of militia barracks and other military expenses which the House of Commons has approved. If so, interest on the loan, amounting to a tolerably heavy sum, will have to be paid between the present time and the 1st April 1878: this interest should therefore have been deducted from the savings which Mr. Cardwell boasted that he had made on the Estimates of this year as compared with those of last year. This loan saddles us, of course, with a certain charge for many years of somewhere about a hundred and fifteen thousand pounds, at 3½ per cent; and we presume from the Minister's statement that the loan can be raised at that rate. We take no exception to the country being asked to pay this charge, but we take much exception to Mr. Cardwell being the Minister

who is allowed to obtain it. He became Secretary of State for War under pretence that the military expenditure was to be diminished without impairing efficiency; and if he can keep up the military departments only by increasing the expenses of them, he has not fulfilled the conditions on which he took office, and he should retire. Putting Mr. Cardwell and his promises aside, we are very glad to see a liberal provision made for the Army. The barracks both for the regular troops and the Militia will be more conveniently placed under the immediate control of the War Office; and the exercising-grounds are so notoriously required that it would be culpable not to provide them. This, however, does not point to decreased military expenditure. Indeed, there is every reason to fear that the abolition of Purchase, and other changes so incautiously made, will result in a very heavy addition to our Army charges. This little loan is only a beginning. Will the country pay with a good grace the expense which it has been so persistent in incurring?

As we expected, the House of Lords has allowed the Ballot Bill to become law. Unnecessary and objectionable as this measure is, we would not have had the Upper House take on itself the responsibility of rejecting it. The postponement of it by the Lords last year gave ample time for the country and the House of Commons to reflect on the proposal; and now again, after lengthened debates, and after a full discussion by the press, a Ballot Bill, passed by a respectable majority in the Lower, has been sent to the Upper House. We must be satisfied that the Commons, for some reasons or other, have irrevocably decided that secret

voting for members of Parliament shall from henceforth be by law compulsory; and this being allowed, it would have been beyond the power of the Peers to do more than temporarily obstruct the passage of a law for the purpose. If the Lords had been ready, as their enemies say that they are, to obstruct for obstruction's sake, they might no doubt have delayed the measure; but in so acting they would, for no permanent good, have run the risk of convulsing the country, and of causing a law which can now be enacted in a perfect calm to be none the less enacted in the greatest excitement. They knew their duty to the country too well to continue their opposition; though, viewing the Ballot Bill with the greatest apprehension, they have passed it in deference to the wish of the people's representatives a second time expressed. We do not doubt that their conduct in this matter was wise and patriotic. How a Bill which is asserted to be as distasteful to the House of Commons and to the people as it is to the Lords ever came up to the latter body at all, is a question which has sorely exercised the 'Times' newspaper, which got rid of some of its seething thoughts thereon on the 10th of July, without throwing the least light upon the paradox which was trying it so. It says:—

"We do not share the gloomy apprehensions so many profess, but it is worth while to ask how it happens that Parliament is passing the Bill against its own inclination. It is admitted on all hands that the substitution of secret for open voting is a decline from better to worse. Why, then, has the Legislature resolved to make the exchange? No one knows how the Bill will work in practice. Some think it will stimulate political activity, others that it will deaden it; some declare that it will re-establish

the Liberal party on a firm basis, others that it will develop Conservative forces hitherto concealed; some look forward to a diminution of the power of political organisation, others to an increase of its authority and strength. The difficulty of obtaining a satisfactory answer to the question, why the progress of civilisation has led to the adoption of a device conceived upon the hypothesis that we are in the midst of an enslaved society, is very much increased when we see the contradiction of opinion that prevails as to the immediate effect of its adoption. Some appear to find everything sufficiently explained by the declaration that the people at large demand the Ballot. We are afraid it must be admitted that the recent elections, when carefully examined, do not prove so much."

And the 'Times,' unable to solve its own enigma, after large writing about the victorious party being urged on by some vague unseen power, the nature of which they could not analyse, while deferring implicitly to its authority—about the career of legislation being directed by a dark fate which we reluctantly obey—and about a power we cannot resist, which is thrusting us onwards whether we will or no,—finally, abandons the argument, leaving its reader considerably more puzzled than it found him—leaving him, that is to say, not only as much as ever puzzled by the original thesis, but confused by the stupendous ideas about fates and powers, and so on. Now, if the 'Times' would condescend to come down out of the clouds, put by for a while its lofty argument

"Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,"

exercise a little of the sound practical sense which it can command when it pleases, and reason like a journal of this world, it would, we are certain, have no difficulty in

grasping the phantom which has so baffled it in the upper air.* If the 'Times' will only recollect, it could give very practical advice to the Lords as to how they ought to vote, and very sound reasons why they should pass the Ballot Bill. It is only to give the Liberal members in the House of Commons credit for having used for their own guidance reasonings very similar to those which the 'Times' dished up for the Lords, and we have a key to what has been done a thousand times more effectual than any weight of metaphysical jargon. We quite agree with the 'Times' in believing that a large section of the Liberal members of Parliament secretly dread the Ballot. They have an apprehension that it will diminish the chances of their being re-elected; and many of them, no doubt, taking higher ground than this, have misgivings as to whether the Ballot may not prove exceedingly mischievous to the country. Yet they vote for the Ballot, and why? Because another apprehension, likely, if it should prove a true one, to be more immediately realised, and to be still more damaging to them than the others, forbids them to act as their inclinations would dictate. Their instinct tells them that their constituents, though not troubling themselves about the Ballot, might choose to think themselves betrayed, and might lash themselves, or be lashed by agitators, into great fury, if the Ballot, once formally proposed, should be rejected by the people's House. It is not certain that such excitement would ensue, but it might, and then what would be the fate of a Liberal member who should have dared to oppose secret voting? Of two possible evils it is wise to

choose the less. Whatever remote risk the member may run by supporting the Ballot, he would run a far greater by openly exhibiting his enmity to it. He can hardly give offence to his constituents by declaring for what it is the fashion to call a popular measure. He therefore determines to do violence to his inclinations, and to "go in" for the Ballot. What the Lords have done in deference to the twice-expressed desire of the Commons, the Liberal party in the Commons have done in deference to the possible desire of the constituencies. And thus we think that a calculation of what was the course less likely to deprive them of their seats explains the whole mystery. They were confronted by a dilemma, and a very disagreeable one; they knew that this dilemma had not been presented by the people, but by the arbitrary action of Government; and hence in their secret hearts they cursed the Ballot by their gods, and would have rejoiced if by any mischance to it or its authors, for which Liberal members could not be held accountable, it could have been blotted out of mind altogether.

Having thus presumed to offer a simple solution of the perverse action of Liberal members—notwithstanding that the great Magician the 'Times' did so by its enchantments, but it could not—we go on to make a few more remarks concerning this uncalled-for Ballot. We may assume, without fear of contradiction, that no demand for the Ballot has proceeded from the people: whence, then, did the demand for it come? Who or what was it that so cruelly forced independent members to a hated choice when they wished the whole ques-

* "Ter conatus ibi collo dare brachia circum,
Ter, frustra comprensa, manus effugit imago."—VIRG.

tion at the devil? Clearly it was the wicked recklessness of the Cabinet which caused Ministers, without being impelled by the country or urged by their own supporters, to dig up these dry bones. Something sensational was wanted. A "programme," now thought by some politicians so necessary at the beginning of a session, was to be got up to show in large letters the great things that the reforming Government was about to do. It mattered not how dangerous a Ballot-agitation might be, or how great a drop "from better to worse," as the 'Times' has it, might be involved. The Ballot might secure office to Mr. Gladstone's Ministry for a little longer, and that was reason enough for proposing it. A more wanton tampering with the welfare of the country it is impossible to conceive. The responsibility for whatever troubles the Ballot may give rise to, must be wholly upon Mr. Gladstone and his Ministry. They have not a shade of excuse in a cry of the people or in a reasonable prospect of good (the prospect, *tests* the 'Times,' is of the opposite kind). Without any worthy inducement, they have not hesitated to subvert the long-established practice of the nation, and to introduce as an experiment a change of which no man can foresee the consequences. Surely we are justified in characterising such conduct as wanton wickedness. And if the country is perplexed and alarmed, as it undoubtedly is, at the mysterious vitality and the possible pernicious effort of the Ballot, how fearful ought it to be of longer submitting its dearest interests to the caprice of a Minister who has shown so plainly how dangerous he is! If there were nothing else to be laid to Mr. Gladstone's charge, this forcing of the Ballot upon an indifferent people and an unwilling Parliament

is enough, and more than enough, to justify his condemnation by the whole community.

Parliament has at length, to its honour, given to the persecuted Mr. Eyre, ex-Governor of Jamaica, the means of paying for his defence against bitter attempts to ruin him through the agency of the law. As the acts which were treated as crimes were done in his capacity as a servant of the crown, and as his case was taken out of the hands of her Majesty's Government by an association of private persons, whose prosecutions fell to the ground, there could not be much hesitation as to the reimbursement, which was affirmed by a majority of 118 in a House of 378. So far all is right; but it is matter of deep regret that the rancour felt towards Mr. Eyre by a particular section of the people and of the press has by no means died out, has not been moderated by finding that it could get no countenance from the law, but is ready to flame as fiercely as ever when it gets the opportunity of showing itself. The last vindictive hope of the active persecutors has now been disappointed. Having failed in inflicting legal penalties, they had at least gone nigh to ruining their victim by the expenses of resisting and baffling them: now the country has consented to bear those expenses, and the Association is beaten at all points. So we need take no further note of them. It is, however, of such importance to this empire, rich as it is in colonies and dependencies, that the acts of her Majesty's representatives abroad should be regarded with a liberal eye, that we take this occasion to ask our readers to review Mr. Eyre's case. We are very glad to find that public opinion, as represented by the 'Times' newspaper, has been moving in a just and generous direction

since the days of the first excitement. The question has been narrowed considerably. It is no longer disputed that Mr. Eyre's conduct in regard to the Jamaica disturbances was in the main right—nay, meritorious; but there is a doubt as to the point of time up to which approval of his action can be unhesitatingly expressed.

"We agree," says the 'Times,' "with Mr. Russell Gurney in holding that a preconceived rising of the black population was distinctly proved, and that, unless it had been crushed with vigour, it might have spread with fearful consequences over the whole island. We agree with Mr. Vernon Harcourt in holding that, at such a crisis and before the danger is over, every presumption should be made on the side of those responsible for the safety of the community. We go further, and hold that up to a certain date, if Mr. Eyre did not merit unqualified gratitude for his promptitude and energy, he at all events merited a full amnesty for any mistakes which he might have committed. We maintain, however, as we have never ceased to maintain, that from and after that date he was guilty of tolerating, if not of directly sanctioning and actively enforcing, a reign of martial law whose horrors justice and humanity forbid us to palliate."

Now, if regard be had to the above expression of the 'Times,' "*before the danger is over*, every presumption should be made, &c.," we shall see at once that the whole matter of Mr. Eyre's guilt or innocence is as undefined and open to as many interpretations as if the opinion had been inspired by Lord Ripon of Washington or Mr. Montague Bernard. The "less accurate" language here employed leaves it as much as ever open to contention when the danger was over, and up to what point every presumption should, in the opinion of the 'Times,' be on the side of Mr. Eyre. "Up to a certain date," we are further told, "Mr. Eyre merited a

full amnesty;" but what was that date? Now, with all respect for the 'Times,' and for the clear heads whose services it obtains, we venture to say that the writer of the above verdict, though doubtless he was impressed with the conviction that the last acts of the Jamaica Government in dealing with the rebellion were not so palpably necessary and justifiable as the first, yet could have had no defined idea in his mind of the point up to which Mr. Eyre deserved to carry with him the sympathy of his countrymen, and beyond which his doings should not be countenanced. We go further, and say that it is next to impossible for any one in this country to determine when the danger was over—impossible, therefore, to determine where Mr. Eyre's meritorious conduct ended, and where his errors (if errors there were) began. We have the facts unequivocally admitted, 1st, That there was a preconceived rising; 2d, that it might have spread over the whole colony; 3d, that it was, therefore, necessary to suppress it; 4th, that it was suppressed. The body of the country is now agreed on all these heads. Nevertheless it views with deep regret, which no man could desire to efface or to lessen, the agency of martial law which it was necessary to invoke, and the unaccustomed and severe punishments which under that law were inflicted. We presume to think that many generous minds, meditating in England and in security over the horrible events, are insensibly carried on from a humane loathing of the punishments to indignation against those who inflicted them, and especially against Mr. Eyre as having given the authority for them. But apart from this sentimental condemnation, there are very many who believe that the disturbances might

have been suppressed and order restored without the use of so much severity. Such judges we would exhort to ask themselves what we have asked the 'Times.' At what point would they have had the martial law or the punishments to cease? They will find it difficult to settle this, and well they may. Mr. Eyre, never looked upon as an inhumane, or a timid, or a wrong-headed man, did not think that the island under his charge could be made secure by milder means; the officers whom he employed did not think so; and the peaceable inhabitants of Jamaica did not think so. We may of course set aside the judgment of each and all of these, and say that we know better than any of them, and that they are all wrong; but such an arbitrary dictum will have very little influence with impartial judges. As a proof of the infinitesimally small weight which may turn the balance for or against Mr. Eyre, we may remember that, on the important question whether it was or was not lawful to take the unhappy Gordon back to the place where his offence was committed, and to have him tried there, the Lord Chief-Justice of England and Mr. Justice Blackburn seriously disagreed. Two learned judges, who have been all their lives conversant and occupied with law, are divided on this point; and yet Mr. Eyre is by many held to be inexcusable, because he, obliged to decide promptly in a disturbed country, could not perceive the exact bearing of the law, and act accordingly. He had more

to do than to extinguish flaming rebellion. He had to put out the sparks, and to take such order as to prevent a repetition of the outbreak and of martial law. In his honest judgment, formed amid the very best opportunities of acquiring accurate knowledge, the spirit of the rebellion could not have been effectually crushed without prompt and sharp punishment. He brought Gordon to trial, and allowed him to be punished; because, if the agents in the rebellion had been severely dealt with while the instigator escaped, the belief would have been established in the negro mind, that the power of the law could not rise above the level of an ignorant peasantry. By causing Gordon to suffer before their eyes, he showed the misguided people that the head of the rebellion could be crushed as certainly as the limbs, and that insurrection endangered all who were connected with it. The execution may be defended on the ground of expediency, and the judges of the land cannot agree that it was illegal. We do not see why we should at all doubt that he was right; if we do doubt him, we do not see how we can prove him to be wrong. He must have the best of the argument. He can show that the measures which he adopted were suited to the purpose which he had in view—viz., the restoration of order—because they did effect that purpose; but it is impossible for those who blame him to prove that milder measures would have sufficed.* It is not natural to be impressed so much by horrid things

* Mr. Hardy, in his admirable reply to Mr. Gladstone, pointed out that after the ordinary law was re-established in Jamaica, Sir J. P. Grant had still to treat the disturbances as an organised conspiracy and a regular insurrection. "I find," he said, "that there were then tried for acts growing out of the insurrection two prisoners, who were condemned to death, fifteen to penal servitude for life, eleven to penal servitude for twenty years, two for ten years, and one for two years, seven women being among these criminals. Here then, were over thirty people against whom it was thought necessary to proceed long after the time when you say the insurrection was suppressed (hear)."

which have only been threatened as by those which have actually occurred, unless we ourselves happen to have been the persons threatened; therefore the punishments under martial law in Jamaica shock us far more than the miseries of which the white population was in danger, and which Mr. Eyre's measures averted. But in order to form a just judgment, we must look not only at what a few coloured people suffered, but at what the black population meditated. The design was neither more nor less than to massacre the whole white population, and to commit all the fiendish atrocities which usually accompany a massacre by negroes. The imagination ought to exercise itself a little on this side of the case, as well as on the other. The insurrection had to be crushed at all hazards, and it was crushed. A few of those who were implicated in it suffered much less severely than they would have made the white people suffer. The negro population was not only prevented from executing their wicked designs, but they were convinced of the uselessness of attempting to overturn order. We feel certain that the great body of Mr. Eyre's opponents are persons who have never lived in Jamaica, nor had any experience among negroes.

We can understand the harsh judgments of people who have no knowledge of the responsibilities of office, or of the greatness of the peril in Jamaica; but we cannot understand how a statesman in Mr. Gladstone's position could have spoken as he did on the subject of compensation to Mr. Eyre. His Government proposed the payment, because, by the act of a former Government, the country was thought to be liable to the expense of repayment; or, to speak more precisely, the House of Commons was liable to be asked whether it would pay

this expense; but Mr. Gladstone himself hinted that if Ministers were to speak their own opinions on the subject, their remarks would not be in favour of the vote. Mr. Gladstone's words will be read by all who hold responsible positions in the distant dependencies of the Crown, and by all the white inhabitants of those dependencies, who are in many cases a small minority holding their own against a less enlightened and many times more numerous race through the aid of the British Government. With what a sickness of heart must every Governor read the speech! with what alarm must it inspire our kinsmen in the West Indies and elsewhere, where the situation is similar! We must only hope that those in office are men of steadfast hearts and clear heads, whom no personal consideration will deter from the performance of their duty. But undoubtedly this language of a revisionary statesman, who, we feel convinced, is ignorant of the mischief which his words are calculated to cause, is to be deprecated. It affords another proof of Mr. Gladstone's unfitness for the office which he holds. He has erred in judgment far more than Mr. Eyre ever did. He has left it to be inferred that as long as he shall be Minister, public servants who may by the conscientious discharge of difficult duties incur the wrath and the attacks through the law of united assailants, will, even when those attacks shall fail, be left to the ruin which their defence must entail. We trust the country will perceive the great mistake here committed, though Mr. Gladstone may not.

We should not have noted Mr. Morrison's attempt to reform the representation had he not introduced his proposal by stating that a change of Government was to be expected, and that the Liberal party,

being in opposition, would raise the cry of electoral reform. If Mr. Morrison spoke from a knowledge of what is going to happen, we must of course prepare for a change as best we may; but if he merely gave utterance to his own expectations, we must say that we differ from him both as to the prospect of a very speedy change, and as to the action which a Liberal Opposition may find it expedient to adopt. Unless Ministers should think a dissolution necessary in the autumn to test the new method of voting, and should thereby find themselves without support, we do not see what is for the present to bring about a change. Some eccentric movement of the Prime Minister may of course at any time create excitement and change, but we cannot reckon on accident. Again, we are less ready than Mr. Morrison to predict what the conduct of the Liberals would be in opposition. Supposing Mr. Gladstone to be eager for office again, and, arguing from the course he took in 1868, it is presumable that he might use electoral reform, or some such measure, as a means of inducing the country to accept him once more. But we do not feel certain that Mr. Gladstone's zeal for governing will ever again be so fervent as it was in 1868. We think there may be truth in the rumour that Mr. Gladstone has some experience of the vanity and vexation of spirit which so many ambitious men have sighed over. Though Mr. Gladstone has held office for nearly four years, and though to many men that might be a sufficient reward, we do not think it is so to Mr. Gladstone. We should not be surprised to find that he is a disappointed man. He desired, if we mistake not, something more than the mere possession of the Premiership, held as he holds it. We fancy that he aimed at doing

great things in a style of which ordinary men are incapable; that he was going to astonish us by his achievements; that, much as he desired office, he desired admiration more. Now, though he keeps office, he has not gained applause. We need not go over all his policy to show how inferior to expectation he has proved himself. And this failure to astonish us all by his abilities, and to extort our admiration, we can conceive to be a cruel wound to his vanity. It is hardly to be supposed that, adopt what platform he may, or whoever may be his next associates, he can ever stand again in so advantageous a position as he stood in four years since. And thus there is some colour for the idea that he may not be disposed to waste more of his life in doing the work of Government. It is also, we think, but giving proper credit to the sagacity of the people to doubt whether they would have Mr. Gladstone again at any price. If we should think of the Liberal party as not led by Mr. Gladstone, then we believe we should be going beyond what Mr. Morrison intended his prediction to cover.

We do not see much force in the argument that the Liberal party, by whomsoever they may be led, will be able, by the offer of wildly democratic measures, to recover power when they shall have gone into opposition. They have had *carte blanche*, and done whatever they listed for four sessions. The Conservative party was unable to thwart them at the first, and latterly has not cared to do so. If the Liberals must disappear from the Treasury benches, it is because they have not strength to hold together, and because the country is tired of them, and disappointed in them, not because their antagonists have prevailed against them and smitten them. Then why, if they

cannot hold their ground while they are in possession, should they be at once able to recover it after displacement? The old pretence that they, eager to benefit the people, have been prevented by Tory corruption and Tory intolerance, will hardly serve them. They are free to introduce any popular measure that they can agree upon; how can they be made more able by being turned out of office? If they have to go, it will be because Government, upon Radical principles, having had free scope, will have been found unsatisfactory to the nation at large. Till now it has been always possible to keep life in the fallacy that there were certain political nostrums which no Government had been virtuous enough to compound, yet which, if dispensed by benevolent hands, would bring about a golden age. The "enormous lying" which secured the first Reform Bill has never ceased to flow on from that time to this, and never ceased to operate until a Radical Ministry, perfectly unshackled, was intrusted with the destinies of the country. Then it was quickly seen how promises differ from performance. The belief in the efficacy

of Radical measures died out from the minds of the people, and it does not seem possible that for years it can again avail to conjure with them. The indifference of the people to politics has been remarked on much of late, but whatever partiality they show is not towards the Radical leaders. During the present year popular favour has turned more towards Mr. Disraeli than towards any other statesman. All this is far from promising to the hopes of Radicalism. The Liberals may try the game which Mr. Morrison anticipates, but we suspect that, though they should be as frantic in their invocations as the priests of Baal, there will be none to answer. Mr. Miall's attack upon the Church was a failure. Even Mr. Gladstone saw fit to discountenance it; * and he cannot flatter himself that his backwardness in aiding Mr. Miall caused the least impatience in the country. The offensive Burials Bill, too, was got rid of with general satisfaction. And if further proof be wanted that the people is getting cloyed with the sweets of Radicalism, it may be found in the 'Times' article, from which we have before quoted, on the Ballot Bill, and in the article of

* What Mr. Gladstone's demurrer amounted to, and what we may expect whenever it may suit his plans to attack the Established Church in England, may be inferred from a letter to one of his constituents, written at the end of last month by Mr. Baxter, who is so nearly related to the Cabinet as to be Secretary to the Treasury. The letter may be read in the 'Times' of the 6th July, in a paragraph headed "Conflicting Duties," and the conflict in this case was between supporting Mr. Miall, as the writer's own inclination would have led him to do, and doing what seemed for the moment expedient for the interest of his party and of himself. Mr. Baxter had been urged to support Mr. Miall even at the cost of losing office, but he was a great deal too acute for any self-sacrifice of that sort, although, as he says, "as decided a Voluntary as ever I was." Two other extracts which we subjoin will show how worthy a follower of a conscientious leader Mr. Baxter is, and how sharply he looks out for number one:—

"Liberals are apt to exalt too many matters into being 'vital,' and at a time when our opponents are carrying seat after seat, we must take care not to play into their hands by giving a place in the programme of the party to questions not yet quite ripe for legislative action."

"I have not the slightest intention of resigning my post in a Ministry which has done so much for the Liberal cause, because it is beyond their power, the people not being prepared for it, to establish perfect religious equality in England as well as in Ireland."

It is just as well to know what colours the Ministry will show when they dare.

July 4th, devoted to Mr. Miall, which ends as follows: "There is nothing that political criticism will not spoil, and even find weak points in. Nothing is to stand except that which stands by itself, and which Parliament cannot touch—successful money-making." By'r lady, we believe that if the 'Times' were not the 'Times,' it would be Conservative! But is successful money-making such a free trade as the 'Times' thinks? Parliament, it is true, does not meddle with it much unless when it seeks its ends by the sale of intoxicating liquors: yet it has its troubles nevertheless. How long will the capitalist be able to extract from the pockets of consumers the increased wages which he is compelled to give to his workmen; and how will it be with capital when consumers shall fasten their pockets up? These are questions to cause anxiety to money-makers. Property, they must remember, is no longer a sacred thing in these islands. The people, thanks to Mr. Gladstone, have been familiarized with confiscation. The antagonism to which we alluded at the beginning of the year* between the great Plutocracy and the great Democracy is not lessened; and the Plutocracy, though it is able so far to recoup itself for what it surrenders, does nevertheless get the worst of every collision. It is a condition of things to make money-getters think, and to make them distrustful of Radical governments. Liberalism seemed for a long time especially favourable to their order, and, of course, it obtained their short-sighted support; but it has travelled now a long way ahead of them and of their interests, and seems likely to be ere long, if it

is not already, the object of their great terror. Will they do nothing to insure themselves? Will they allow Parliament to pass measures which it does not like under the impression that a mysterious power superior to the intelligence and the property of the country, is the only power which it has need to propitiate? If not, they must stir themselves at once, and enlist boldly on the side of order. They, if any, may have reason to rejoice that the people is sick of pulling down. If they are wise, they will with all their might encourage a policy of tolerance and forbearance toward our institutions. They may rely on it that this is their only chance of walking much longer in that independence of Parliament, by which they have excited the admiration of the 'Times.'

We make change after change, in the hope no doubt of establishing national prosperity and happiness on a sure foundation. Every great change is to procure us some notable advantage, but fails to do so, and we seek the good which still eludes us from further change. Yet we do not appear to get any nearer to perfection, and what we do get nearer to may be read in the history of a neighbouring nation, more reckless in the practice of overturning than ourselves. It is to be doubted whether our people, intent on their own affairs, and now feeling but little alarm from the ambition of France, sufficiently reflects on what is passing on the southern side of the English Channel. Frenchmen are there humbly bringing pieces of silver—the great and the small alike contributing their property to amass the enormous fine by which alone they can procure the withdrawal of

* Vide 'Blackwood's Magazine' for February 1872; Art.—"The Reasonable Fears of the Country."

a foreign army from their territory. They are unable to beat off the invader. They have lost the great military prestige which once consoled them for the want of substantial benefits. France has been shorn of her provinces on the Rhine, and such tranquillity as she enjoys is dependent on the life of one intrepid, vigorous, able old man, an octogenarian. None can foresee what is in store for her after that most valuable life shall cease. So distracted is she that she can decide on no lasting settlement of her government, can make no provision for the day of difficulty which cannot be far off. The prospect is bounded by a dark veil, and behind the veil lurk anarchy, Communism, national disintegration, and a crowd of shapeless spectres which, though Providence may yet defend fair France from their horrors, are nevertheless known to be threatening the future. This is the result of eighty years of changes. France has seen in those eighty years two Empires, two monarchies, and three republics: she has been torn by intestine convulsions; the blood of her children has been poured out like water in her wars; her capital has been three times occupied by hostile armies; and now, in her humiliation and misery, she is further from the goal which she has been seeking than she was in the last century. It is not simply that her people are unwilling to constitute a stable national power; they have destroyed the elements out of which power can be consolidated. Nothing is left which men by habit and consent will reverence; there is no common bond, no rallying-point; her wealth is being taken from her by her conqueror: how will she cohere? While we shudder at her fate, we do not turn back from following in her footsteps; we followed more readily than she rushed on,

it is true, but we follow nevertheless. There are men among us ready to destroy what remains of our national ties, of our orders and our institutions, and to break us up into a chaos of selfish factions, as helpless, as unmanageable, and as suicidal as those in France. If we allow such men to injure us, it will be through ignorance, of course; but ignorance is not excusable when we can learn if we will from an example such as we have in France.

Justice is not very prompt in pursuing the persons denounced as having been guilty of intimidation at the last election for the county Galway. Nearly two months have gone by since Mr. Justice Keogh made his report, and yet the chief of the accused remain at large. They may use the opportunity to escape, since, in the opinion of the judge who denounced them, they are liable, if convicted, to the punishment of penal servitude. We are promised that Government will either itself submit a motion to the House of Commons, or will give to private members the opportunity of submitting a motion, relative to the judgment of Mr. Justice Keogh, about the 25th July. We shall have gone to press by that date; but we trust that the House, so anxious to suppress corrupt practices in general, will express itself unequivocally as to the iniquities perpetrated in this instance. Ministers have hitherto not spoken on the question, and they may intend to put the law honestly in force. The delay in proceeding is defended in some quarters by the argument that it allows time for excitement to subside; but it cannot surely be imagined that the case can be brought prominently before the public again without creating the greatest excitement, whether it come up a month sooner or a month later. The intrepid Keogh

is, we observe with pleasure, going circuit so far unharmed, and compelling the respect even of his enemies by his manly bearing. While, however, Ministers keep back discussion in the Commons till the very end of the session, the House of Lords has not delayed to express its opinion with regard to the conduct of one of its own members who has been rash enough to rush into the fray, notwithstanding that he holds the office of Lord Lieutenant of an Irish county, and is Lieutenant-Colonel of an Irish militia regiment. Lord Granard, the peer whose conduct was complained of, declined to enter upon a full explanation of it, because the whole of the evidence concerning the Galway election petition was not before Parliament; whereupon he fell under the lash of the Marquis of Salisbury who asked, since the time had not come to explain,

"How the time had come to use these expressions. (Hear, hear.) If he (Lord Granard) is so scrupulous that he will not break silence now before legal proceedings have been completed and legal investigations have been finished, how was it that he did not restrain his cursive and cursing pen until he had an opportunity of knowing whether the expressions which he used were justified by the facts? . . . The question is not what Mr. Justice Keogh said. There is no necessity for waiting for the evidence to be produced. . . . The question is whether the Lieutenant of an Irish county is or is not justified in publicly denouncing in vituperative terms the act of one of her Majesty's judges; and that question is in no way affected by what her Majesty's judge may have done. If he has done wrong, there are authorities who can deal with him: but it is not for a lieutenant, representing her Majesty, to point him out to

the violence, anger, and fanaticism of a hostile mob. . . . I do not deny, indeed, that this proceeding is in some degree in keeping with the policy which the Government have announced with respect to Ireland. I believe that to appoint a lieutenant who hounds on the mob against her Majesty's judges, and who publicly eulogises a rebellion against the British crown which is still in the memory of living men—I believe that that is 'governing Ireland according to Irish ideas.' (A laugh.) In that respect her Majesty's Government have been perfectly consistent; but it is useless to preach the maintenance of law in Ireland, it is useless to maintain the most stringent Coercion Act ever inflicted on that country, if they allow persons in high position to defy the law, and point out its ministers to the vengeance of the people."

No one can say that this castigation was not merited by Lord Granard; no one can say that he is fit to remain lieutenant of a county after committing himself by an act of such violent partisanship.* We do, however, hope that the noble Marquis overstated the case against her Majesty's Government when he supposed them to be abettors of Lord Granard's indiscretions. The Government has, it is true, been tardy; we could expect nothing less from weak Ministers whose duty it is to do an act of justice which will earn for them the denunciations of a faction for whose support they have been sacrificing the loyal classes in Ireland and humiliating themselves; but they have not yet refused to do justice on Lord Granard or upon the other transgressors on whose behalf his lordship was so unbecomingly vehement. We hope yet that in so clear a case the cabinet will see the imprudence (to say nothing of the guilt) of attempting to screen per-

* Since this has been in type we have seen the announcement of Lord Granard having resigned the Lord-Lieutenancy of Leitrim, and of his resignation having been accepted.

sons who have so flagrantly committed themselves. It has an opportunity of showing that it can, on so important an occasion, put the public interest before the vile interest of party. We will not assume before the event that even Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet will altogether fail of its duty in this matter.

We have before now had to remark on the inconsistencies exhibited by the supporters of Mr. Gladstone's legislation, and on the proneness of both leaders and followers to put great and general principles aside altogether, and to act simply in the interests of party; and we cannot now refrain from remarking on the example of this frailty which came to light in the debate on the third reading of the Coal Mines Regulation Bill in the Commons. Mr. Auberon Herbert has, it appears, been brought to see the inexpediency of Parliament interfering in the contracts made between employers and employed, and has cautioned the House of Commons against embarking in legislation of this kind. He said:—

"Not only was the tendency of such legislation to discountenance habits of self-reliance, and to substitute in their stead an expectation of continual interference from that House, but if the House once entered upon such a course they would find it utterly impossible to stop. . . . The line now adopted would in the future lead to a reliance on State aid instead of on combination and individual energy. Matters of this kind, affecting labour and capital, ought to be settled between capital and labour, and not to be carried to an assembly where discussions were apt to be influenced by politics and sentiment. . . . The great characteristic of our country was the tendency to self-help in every direction. He appealed to working men not to bring these questions before the House; if they gained any advantage for the moment, it would be more than counterbalanced afterwards. He hoped also that the House would look ahead before entering on a

course of which they did not see the end. Let them give protection to those who could not protect themselves—let them protect children and animals—(hear, and a laugh)—but treat the men of this country, and also women, as grown-up and intelligent beings, whose energies would only be depressed and limited by State interference. (Hear, hear.)"

We can hardly conceive any member to have listened to these observations without having his mind carried back to the Irish Land Act; yet nobody except Mr. Mundella appears to have perceived how they applied to it. Whether Mr. Herbert was right or wrong in the maxims which he put forward, it is clear that they apply with much greater force to the Irish Act than to the Mines Bill. If it be proposed in the latter that the law shall interfere with contracts, it is only for the purpose of assuring to every person concerned what he believes to be, and what every one else allows to be, his covenanted rights. What the Irish Act did was so far to destroy the balance of a covenant that the landowner shall always have the worst of it, whatever its terms may be. And yet the Irish tenants are not children nor (in Mr. Herbert's sense) animals. They are some of the shrewdest, quickest-witted people in the world; and because they are well able to take care of themselves, and to make a good bargain, the law steps in to make it a better bargain for them still. Now, if there be many Radical members who agree with Mr. Herbert's principles as above set forth, we should like to know how, consistently with those principles, they can refrain from endeavours to repeal the iniquitous Irish Land Act. To vote for that, and then to complain of the clauses referring to wages, is verily to have swallowed the camel first and then to strain at

a gnat. It is much to be feared that the principles of legislation enounced by Mr. Gladstone's followers are seen to have force only when they operate favourably for their own side in politics; and that they are made to ship and unship, as the sailors say, at pleasure, like Mr. Gladstone's own convictions.

On the same evening on which Mr. Herbert distinguished himself as above, the dignity of debate was greatly promoted by Mr. Delahunty, who, after hearing some remarks of Mr. Lowe concerning joint-stock banks, said that, "after the miserable speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he was determined to bring forward this subject again next session, when he would smash him up. (Laughter)." Eloquence such as this indicates the level to which the House of Commons is descending. Englishmen will do well for the future to look at home before they make merry over the barbarisms which sometimes disgrace foreign and colonial assemblies. We have not the least objection to Mr. Delahunty "smashing up" Mr. Lowe if he is able, but we do very much object to bluster being imported into the House—more especially when it is expressed in the language of the prize-ring.

Mr. Bright has been indulging in a little eloquence quite in his old style. During his temporary absence from Parliament, he would seem to have been "nursing his wrath to keep it warm;" and now that the fire has kindled, and at the last he has spoken with his tongue, the pent-up steam is quite scalding. No doubt Mr. Bright's sentiments are what he, with unconscious irony, would call eminently liberal, while to all who are not his bigoted admirers they must seem to breathe the very spirit of intolerance. To differ in opinion from Mr. Bright in politics is a great deal more than a

misfortune: it is a crime—nothing less. There is the light of Mr. Bright's teaching to see by, and those who continue blind do so by their own election, and are depraved and hopelessly corrupt. There is no chance for a free-thinker in Mr. Bright's liberal code. Once there was a doctrine more in vogue than it is now, which taught that man is responsible for his religious belief. We remember the indignation and scorn with which this doctrine was treated by professing Liberals. The idea that there could be uniformity of opinion on even the most sacred subjects throughout a race of beings whereof the individuals are so differently constituted, was ridiculed as the most absurd and arbitrary ever invented by priestcraft. The mission of Liberalism was, among other things, to emancipate the world from this debasing superstition. But here we have liberalism, as expounded by its high priest, insisting upon absolute conformity, passive obedience, and a surrender of the judgment to liberal apostolic guidance. There was in old times a man of whom probably Mr. Bright never heard, although they are kindred spirits. That man had a bed which he insisted upon everybody fitting, and to which he had a method of fitting every one whom he thought proper to lay on it. Mr. Bright's liberal doctrines are like that bed—they must be the standard of stature for every one, great and small. It is permitted us sometimes to speculate on what might have happened if nature or fortune had a little altered some one's condition. Mr. Anthony Weller, senior, it may be remembered, admiring his son Samuel's "wast power o' suction," as exhibited in the absorption of a pot of ale, imagined that he would have made a remarkable oyster if he had been born in that station of life.

Using the same privilege of giving the rein to fancy, we apprehend that it is lucky for a good many of our kind that Mr. Bright was not born in the purple, but in a station of life where intolerance can find expression by the tongue only. Howbeit, tolerant or intolerant, Mr. Bright is a sturdy Englishman who has "the courage of his opinions," and will stand to them through weal or woe, through evil report or good report, in the time of their tribulation and in the time of their wealth; and he would refuse to yield an atom of his tenets, we verily believe, if he were at the stake or on the scaffold, and a word of concession would save him. How advantageously does he contrast with the time-serving turncoat, who, after Mr. Bright had sown the seed, and the harvest was ready for the sickle, came over to him to take the fruit!

How brisk is legislation in the month of July! The season is as potent as the quack doctor in a pantomime, and under its influence bills which for months had seemed to be in the last stage of decrepitude—battered, paralysed, denounced, forsaken—spring suddenly into life again, receive an afflatus of astonishing vigour, and go off the boards with a hop, skip, and jump. Whether this rapid work is good work, whether it may not be to a great extent "scamped," is a separate question; we only say that the pace at which it moves is, after the faltering and hardly appreciable advances of the spring, quite like the work of magic. Obstructions and difficulties vanish in some inconceivable way; honourable members between whom had passed the wager of battle over some minor bill are suddenly seen shoulder to shoulder, harmoniously and kindly assisting the bone of contention into law; the lions that were in the path are, on a sudden, down in their lairs keeping dark

and leaving the way clear; and there is a sort of after-dinner fraternisation, and a somewhat indiscreet zeal in launching statutes into being. As in 'Quentin Durward,' when the sham herald, after having been tested by Toison d'Or, is detected and scourged, Lewis and Charles forget their animosities of years in delight at the impostor's terror and writhings, Lewis laying his hand on Charles's shoulder and Charles catching hold of Lewis's cloak; so when July is seen taking to its heels and rushing away, rival patriots put aside their feuds, to be pursued again that day six months, and make awkward attempts at brotherly love. Hybrid bills, compounded of wholly incongruous parts, and half-measures, are the fruit of these compromises. No matter: the great thing is to get them off fast enough.

Among the hurried products of the present session we find a Public Health Bill, which everybody says is not the Bill we want, but which almost everybody is anxious to pass. Perhaps, as the Government is not prepared with a comprehensive measure, there is wisdom in doing what is practicable as a beginning to assure the public that Parliament is in earnest about sanitary work. It is a most difficult subject, and one which, directly or indirectly, affects so many interests, that it will take some time to frame a law that will work well. For the present, we are glad to see the attempt to legislate. Sir Massey Lopes opportunely withdrew the amendment which he had been contemplating, and so smoothed the way. We cannot think him wrong in desiring that the local boards should be relieved of a portion of the expenses attending sanitary regulations; neither can we see that he laid himself open to Mr. Vernon Harcourt's sarcasm, who attempted to condense Sir M. Lopes's

speech into a sentence,—“You may govern us as much as you like if you will only pay for it.” A consideration of the speech of the 16th July, in connection with the elaborate exposition of the Local Rates question which the honourable baronet made in the spring with so much success, will show that Mr. Harcourt by no means fairly interpreted him. The argument is, that although numerous and immense charges continue to be made against the local rates all over the kingdom, yet the local boards are not allowed that discretionary power over the funds produced by the rates which alone would be any compensation for having to raise the money. A Government inspector is continually “nagging” and meddling, and, to show that he holds no sinecure, recommending changes which the boards are unable to refuse; so that virtually it is the Central Government and not the local board that controls nearly all local business. Of course it just suits the Central Government to really exercise all the control, while a local board has to find the money: a Government can be very officious and very liberal on such terms. “But,” says Sir Massey Lopes, “if you take the direction out of our hands you ought to find the money. We didn’t ask you to do our work for us, but you thought proper to do it, so you ought to find the means of carrying out your own plans.” This is very different from what Mr. Harcourt conceives to have been said. It is not an offer (so to speak) to sell the control to the Government, but it is an assertion that Government has already seized on the control, and therefore ought to find at least a share of the charges. We may confidently hope now that a Public Health Bill will make its appearance on the Statute-book. The heading is one that will not disappear from thence for many a day.

As the end of the month approaches, we find, not without disappointment, that Mr. Cardwell’s Loan Bill is not so safe as it appeared a fortnight since. We many times drew attention to the impropriety of throwing aside this important Bill till the end of the session, while the vigorous Parliamentary period was occupied with such measures as the Ballot and the Intoxicating Liquors Bills. Perhaps Mr. Cardwell, although not for the same reasons, may now also think that it would have been better to take the House of Commons at the heat. His ground is not so strong that he can neglect times and seasons when the House is not disposed to be over-critical. His measure professes to mean, and we believe does mean, efficiency, but it does not mean economy; and Mr. Cardwell undertook to gratify the country with the two together. He must not complain if, after giving them so much time, some of his Radical friends have found out that they are getting from him only half of his bond. Mr. Cardwell has shown, or it has been shown on his behalf, that a great deal of the money to be borrowed will only pass from the Imperial Treasury to the county treasuries; also that in a year or two, when the full number of barracks shall be built, the country will be relieved of some £70,000 per annum which is now paid as billet-money. This is true, and is all in favour of the loan, which we wish to see granted. Nevertheless, we do not think that Mr. Cardwell spoke ingenuously (and we cannot forgive him for it) in taking credit for the whole saving on the Army Estimates, when he knew that the interest of the loan would have to be set against the saving. It was a paltry device, and it may bring its own punishment.

We rejoice to see that the House

of Lords has amended the Education Bill for Scotland in the manner and for the purpose which the other House sanctioned when it passed Mr. Gordon's resolution in opposition to the Government. Ministers found means to prevent the resolution from being carried into effect by the Commons, but the Lords have now supplied the defect; and, as their Lordships have done only what the Lower House affirmed that it was right to do, the amendments will scarcely be objected to. It is hoped now that the Bill as passed will be so far acceptable to the people of Scotland that it will make due provision for religious teaching, contrary to the godless intention of the Government. The Duke of Argyll, who has been tolerably discreet since Lord Cairns admonished him when he ranted about the Collier job, got a little flighty again in July, said the amendment was insincere, and spoke of the recognition in the preamble of the principle that religious teaching is desirable as simply a red rag held out to a bull: so Lord Cairns admonished his grace again, saying that

"He was sorry to hear the noble Duke compare the recognition of religious teaching to the holding out of a red rag to a bull. (Hear.) If there was any insincerity—which he denied—in the amendment proposed to the preamble, there was insincerity in every word of the noble Duke's speech on the second reading, because the burden of that speech was, that means were afforded by the Bill for continuing religious instruction in Scotland."

The noble Duke's comparison of a red rag held to a bull, though very unbecoming when used in reference to the teaching of the Scriptures, might nevertheless have illustrated another subject of which he is cognisant and which is one of the curiosities of Mr. Gladstone's Ministry.

Mr. Gladstone's irascible bull is Mr. Ayrton. Any representation or remonstrance from any body on whom the First Commissioner of Works can vent his ferocity is a red rag, and certain to put the animal on the rampage. Dr. Hooker, the last victim, so far as we know, that has been rushed at, has fortunately got so high a reputation that the public will not see him gored and trampled on without interfering. Justice has been demanded of Mr. Gladstone, but of course not obtained from that wrong-headed gentleman; so Parliament is about to deal with the bull and his leader, both of whom, it is hoped, will be baited as they deserve. We much regret that we must go to press before the sport comes off, for we should have been glad to notice some of the passages in the entertainment.

The weeding of the order-book having been announced, prorogation may be looked upon as at hand. We find nothing to regret in the abandoned bills, and only wish that the Ballot Bill, which has been followed by the contemptuous dislike, open or concealed, of nearly every honest man in the country, had shared their fate. Completion of the Supply votes, the formal passage of the remaining measures, and the one or two discussions on the conduct of Government which are promised, will quite fill the time to the end of the first week in August, when honourable members may hope to obtain the relaxation which they have earned by pretty close attendance, if not by putting out very useful work. The period during which they have sat has been an anxious one; and though the Government did its utmost to embroil us, we may breathe again now, and congratulate ourselves that we have evaded the ruinous penalties to which Mr. Gladstone's precious treaty made us liable.

We ventured to predict in February* last that the session of 1872 would be anything but a peaceful one for Ministers, notwithstanding the hopes of tranquillity to which they had given utterance before it began. It has proved a very stormy, and to them a very damaging, session; and, but that they have benefited by their own blunders, they would not have retained office to the end of it. There were grave complaints against them, recognised by their supporters as well as their opponents, any one of which complaints might have led to their dismissal, had not Parliament withheld its blow, because it was impossible to let them quit office until the entanglement with America in which they stood meshed should, by unravelling or cutting or rending, be brought to an end. Through this entanglement they tided over the Collier and Ewelme jobs; they were not driven from office after the beatings which they from time to time received; and they were enabled to shirk the expression of the opinion of Parliament on the loss of the *Megara*. From immediate punishment for the bungling about the American Treaty they have been rescued by the Arbitrators at Geneva; but we trust that the discussion of all the circumstances of that treaty is only postponed until next session, when probably the Arbitrators' award will be known. Notwithstanding that their Army Estimates have mounted to a very heavy sum, they have induced Parliament to pass them under the promise that the expense now incurred will lead to ultimate saving, and that we are to be free henceforth from panics. As Parliament has thought fit to accept these promises, we must now only wait the result, rejoiced at any

rate that something has been done to improve the service. Mr. Gladstone was too much frightened about the treaty to repeat after Easter the unseemly exhibitions of temper for which he favoured the House of Commons earlier in the year; and probably it was for the same reason that his flow of speech in the latter half of the session was so much less copious than in the former; he was quite morose, in fact, and really seemed to be aware that no one could possibly admire him in the circumstances in which he stood. We doubt whether it is a subject for congratulation to the Cabinet any more than it is to the country, that the session will come to an end without a change of Government. The opinion seems general that a change must come ere long; and we do not expect that, when the leisure of the autumn shall allow the events of the year to be examined, Ministers will find themselves at all pleasantly spoken of. The Conservatives do not regret that they have still to "work and wait." They have made no great assault on the Ministry; neither have they used the opportunities which have offered for embarrassing or obstructing the work of Government. Whatever embarrassments or obstructions have occurred—and they have been many—have been Ministers' own achievement, or are due to sections of the so-called Liberal party. A period of great commercial prosperity and an abundant revenue have had their usual effect in keeping down political excitement, and in mitigating to Ministers the consequences of their own blunders. And yet, prosperity notwithstanding, there is an uneasy feeling abroad of which we are all conscious—an uneasiness which would swell to alarm and commotion if any

* See 'Blackwood's Magazine' for February 1872.—art., "The Reasonable Fears of the Country."

untoward accident should create damage or danger. There is a misgiving lest we may have gone too far in politics; that we have provided our ship for fair weather only; that we have been careless of, or thrown overboard, warnings and safeguards; and that our chance of repose is in avoiding squalls and billows, for we can no longer weather a gale. In such circumstances, it is clearly the duty of all to aid in arresting the progress of revolution; and especially it is the duty of educated and reflecting men who can influence others to point out the dangers which lie in our path, and to show us how, if we cannot avoid, we can overcome them. But what we see is the men who wield the power of the State the foremost in the race for demolition. Not urged forward, or pressed upon from behind, they

devise excisions and underminings, which they speciously recommend to the people who have, so far, allowed themselves to be ensnared, notwithstanding that they have an instinctive perception of the danger. Will their fears, and a surfeit of sensational legislation, operate at last, so as to produce caution and a pause in the downward course? We think there is reason to hope that they will; and that, the irresolute stage having been passed—the stage of disapproval without action—the country will now stir itself to shake off the evil influence; and that those of us who may live to the beginning of 1873 may then see the people active in securing what yet remains of our once prized patrimony, and unequivocally condemning the guides who beckon us to confusion and ruin.



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A TRUE REFORMER.—PART VII.

CHAPTER XXVI.—A FIRST GLIMPSE OF ELEUSIS.

THERE is a latent fund of capriciousness in most human beings which makes them difficult to satisfy. Here was I, who had achieved an amount of Parliamentary success in a few weeks as far exceeding my own expectations as those of anybody else; yet when the opportunity was now given me to place my feet on the official ladder, the goal of all my hopes, thus unexpectedly available to climb; this first necessary progress accomplished, I yet found myself actually deliberating whether or not I should accept the Premier's offer. My doubt, so far as it admitted of being analysed, arose partly from a suspicion that the offer was made not so much as a tribute to my merits, as in view to gagging a man who might prove troublesome, for office has a wonderfully deodorising effect on the most malignant political miasma. At any rate, whether the design were intentional or not, there could be no doubt such would be the practical effect of taking sub-

ordinate office. A junior member of the Government, I well knew, was expected to speak only to the cue, while of course his independence is in great measure gone. Supposing then that I really had the capacity for attaining distinction, should I not take higher ground by holding on longer to the part of an independent member, and waiting for an opportunity of entering office hereafter in a higher place with a Parliamentary reputation already made?

Such were the uneasy promptings of ambition. Looking round me, and back over the history of the past few years, the lower courses of the governmental pyramid seemed to be made up of men of fair promise, whose career stopped short at the point of achieving some small office, while half-a-dozen of the leading men could be named who had never been anything else but leading men, starting off at score in the first flight as Cabinet Ministers. Even Perkyman of the Opposition

side began as a full Secretary of State. But then, on the other hand, some of the ablest men of either party had made quite a humble beginning: Mr. (or as he was generally called by people who did not know him, Tommy) Sinnick, for example, and even Mr. Merrifield himself taking office first in subordinate posts, and working their way up by degrees more or less rapidly to high place. Clearly, then, a man's career must depend after all upon himself, and not upon the accident of entering office early or late. Besides, what I particularly stood in need of was official experience. My mind, therefore, was soon made up, as indeed no doubt it had been really from the first, for my pretence of weighing the pros and cons of the case hardly imposed upon myself; and accordingly I sat down and wrote a note to the Prime Minister accepting his gratifying offer, and my appointment to be Paymaster-General of the Forces was announced in the second edition of that evening's *Piccadilly*, where, however, it occupied quite an obscure corner; and people were so occupied in discussing Lord Stowe's succession to Mr. Thorowcome as War Minister, and the other great political changes involved by the latter statesman's lamented retirement from office in the prime of life, that this small matter of the disposal of the Paymaster-Generalship passed almost unnoticed, except perhaps by my own acquaintances and the official world; and my vanity was flattered by finding at a dinner-party that evening that not a soul in the room was aware that the guests included a member of the Government. But then it was not a political party, and the people could not have read their *Piccadilly* before setting out for it.

The next day, it so happened, was the Ascot Cup day, for which we were

engaged to share Mr Paterson's box; so that although I confess to a burning impatience to enter on my new office, the ceremony must needs be deferred till the Friday, and even then I was somewhat puzzled how to act, having heard nothing further on the subject from Mr. Merrifield or anybody else. What the nature of the process ordinarily was I did not know. My experience of such matters had been limited to witnessing the inauguration of an Indian viceroy, when all the Government officials at Calcutta, including the outgoing viceroy, assembled to receive him amid salutes of artillery on the great staircase of Government House, and everybody crowded into the council chamber afterwards to see him sworn in, the decorum which usually obtained in that solemn apartment being replaced on this one occasion by a turbulent mob. A viceroy, however, is a very great personage indeed; but even when a new general came to take up his command at an up-country station, his arrival used to be announced by a salute, and everybody called upon him that same morning officially, "undress uniform, with swords," as prescribed beforehand in the station order-book. It was the same sort of thing even with a new brigadier, except that there were not so many guns fired. But these precedents did not throw any light on the question how a Paymaster-General to the Forces was to be installed. However, the first thing to be done was to resign my seat in Parliament, and set about getting re-elected—a very easy matter I found, and not even involving a visit to Leatherby, the good people of which snug little place had become so accustomed to be represented by a Government official, as naturally to regard my appointment in the light of a tribute to their own sagacity in choosing me. This matter having been set

on foot, it did not seem desirable to await the formal warrant or letters-patent of appointment, which might take some weeks to get ready, before entering on office; and so in the absence of any further communication on the subject—for the discovery of Lady Elizabeth Merrifield's card on the hall table when we returned from Ascot hardly bore on the subject officially—I put on my hat on Friday about noon and walked down to the office in Pall Mall.

There were two or three messengers sitting about in the dingy lobby which did duty for the main entrance, and addressing the one who seemed least preoccupied with his newspaper, I asked if Lord Stowe were in. The man, who seemed properly scandalised at the idea of an unknown individual demanding to see the Minister, immediately replied that his lordship was engaged; what was the nature of my business? On my giving my name, however, the man immediately apologised and conducted me to the new Secretary of State's room. And here let me say at once that, so far as my experience goes, these office-messengers are a very good set of fellows. They do lead an apparently lazy life, but that is just what they are paid to do; their business is always to be ready when wanted, to be always in fact loitering over the newspapers. If occasionally somewhat crusty with outsiders, it must be remembered that they are continually pestered by impracticable visitors and callers making foolish inquiries, or asking for impossible information; but they seemed to me to be trustworthy and obliging, and to have especially the difficult knack of serving a great many masters. Their foible, so far as I could make out, was in holding a thinly-concealed cheapness of estimate for the Parliamentary sub-officials of the office, whom they ap-

peared to regard as a sort of needless excrescence attached to it by Providence to prevent the routine working properly. I thought I could always detect in the man's face who brought me papers to initial—especially at first—an expression of tolerant forbearance implying that he regarded the proceeding as one of those unmeaning forms required by the exigencies of Parliamentary government, and that the business in his opinion would be far better done if we did not meddle with the disposal of it by the permanent officials.

My predecessor in the affections of the Leatherby electors, whom oddly enough I had never met before, was a well-preserved man of sixty, with a high forehead, a prime, close-shaven face, and thin, compressed lips that might signify great force of character, or might signify nothing of the kind, according as the facts turned out; the sort of face that would have appeared suitable to any sphere in life. Had you met Lord Stowe in a railway-carriage, and been told by your companion in a whisper that he was a director of the Bank of England, you would at once have replied that he looked exactly like what a bank director might be expected to be. Had you been told that he was the managing clerk of a large city firm, the natural answer would have been that he looked just the man for the post. The same judgment might have been passed had the spruce face set off the figure of an elderly clerk in Somerset House; while it seemed a very suitable figurehead for a steady-going Minister who had now worked his way up to a place in the Cabinet. Whether Lord Stowe was a man to lead others, or be led by them, his face showed no more than do the faces of most other people, whose characters we are in the habit of inferring with accuracy from their

features whenever we happen to know all about them beforehand.

"Ha, Captain West," said he, "how do you do? Very glad indeed to make your acquaintance, and very glad indeed to welcome you as a colleague. And how are they all getting on at Leatherby? A very snug little place, isn't it? I really must try to get down there and see my worthy old friends again, some day."

"Old friends indeed; I believe your lordship represented them for over twenty years."

"Nearer twenty-five: you see the place suited me very well; there was no trouble about it, thanks to our excellent friend Sheepshanks, and very little expense, and I believe I suited them; I was able to advance local interests in one or two little matters, you see, as well as to help on one or two of the deserving young men. I had the advantage over you there, ha! ha! Patronage, I'm afraid, doesn't go beyond the office-messengers nowadays." From which short dialogue I inferred that Lord Stowe really would probably not go down and see his worthy old friends—at any rate until business might take him to those parts.

Well, now, his lordship proceeded, as to the work of the office. He was, like myself, quite new to the place, and greatly altered it seemed to be since he was in the department before, fifteen years ago. But one department was pretty much like another, he thought, and we should no doubt all soon get into smooth working order. As to distribution of work? Well, he hardly knew yet how that was arranged, but of course all important papers came to him before they were disposed of, and Tregarth (he was the permanent Under-Secretary) kept a general control over everything. 'Brings all the official strands toge-

ther to make a proper cable of them, you understand, as we used to say when I was at the Admiralty." Then we must look to the heads of departments to keep us all square. A very able set of men, are the permanent heads of all the public offices. Very good here as elsewhere, but he didn't know if he altogether liked their system of docketing. They did the docketing best at the Board of Commerce, he thought. Yes, no doubt I was right, and there was a very great deal to be done in the department, although certainly, Thorowcome would appear to have done a great deal already; a man with very sound judgment was poor Thorowcome, and great official experience. Still it was, as I very truly remarked, an extremely responsible office, and an extremely important time to have charge of it,—very much so, indeed. He was very glad to think he should have the benefit of my practical experience, and no doubt we should have many important deliberations together, and he hoped I should always proffer advice freely, whenever I saw occasion to do so. I thought that a very great effort would be needed, did I? and that the proper path of army reform had yet to be discovered and entered upon? Well, that was an interesting question, but he was disposed to take a more sanguine view of matters. The people in the office seemed to think that things were going on very well; the audit was very efficient, and the control over the stores seemed complete and satisfactory. However, of course I would look into these matters, and make any suggestions that occurred to me. There was one thing he ought to mention. We must be prepared, at any rate, for a certain amount of reduction in next year's estimates, of course; there had been no reduction to speak of for the last two years, and the public would

probably begin to raise a cry for it about next year. I hoped such a cry would be resisted, did I? Well, he for his part was prepared to resist any undue change, but these things I knew were very much matters of degree, and in such affairs a Government must be satisfied to follow public opinion, rather than to lead it. It was usually the safest course. Besides, Mr. Merrifield would probably wish for reductions, Sinnick (Mr. Sinnick was Chancellor of the Exchequer) would be certain to do so, and Bracton (Bracton was the Parliamentary Under-Secretary) seemed to think there was abundant room for retrenchment. As to distribution of business? Well, as he was in the Upper House, the arrangements made by Mr. Thorowcome would no doubt need to be modified. Bracton, of course, would have to move the estimates next year, and he and I would divide the answering of

questions, and the general business of the Commons, between us. I knew Bracton, of course? "No! Then let us go to his room and I will introduce you;" and so saying, his lordship got up and led the way to the Under-Secretary's room, which was just at the end of the passage.

We found Mr. Bracton walking up and down, with his hands in his pockets, dictating to a private secretary sitting at the table. "Well," said Lord Stowe, after the introduction, "I shall leave you gentlemen to discuss matters together. You will find Captain West full of practical ideas, Bracton, a most valuable colleague, I am sure," and so saying he quitted the room; and the private secretary also slipping away, Mr. Bracton and I fell to conversation, Mr. Bracton standing in the middle of the room with his hands in his pockets, and I sitting on his table for want of the offer of a chair.

CHAPTER XXVII.—INTRODUCES SOME DISTINGUISHED OFFICIALS.

The Right Honourable John Bracton began life, I believe, as a West Indian planter, and after achieving a moderate fortune in that line, returned home and entered Parliament as member for a very Radical manufacturing town in the north on an extreme Radical platform, which, so far as could be gathered indirectly from various hints scattered through his speeches, both in and out of Parliament, embraced a general cutting down of everything, the estimates, the army and navy, the bishops, the aristocracy, and even it might be inferred still more exalted institutions; and since Mr. Bracton did not, like some members of the Liberal school, wear his hair long, or part it in the middle, or lisp, but spoke with point and sense in a dogged, stubborn manner, and was as bold in the

House as out of it, he promised to become a somewhat important element in the political world, possibly a leader eventually of the extreme Left. But when, shortly after Mr. Merrifield's Ministry was first formed, a murmur arose among the organs of that branch of the party, low at first, but gaining force as it was echoed from one to the other, as to the claims of the extreme Left to a larger share of office, and it was soon asked with outspoken indignation, whether the real representatives of the people were to be made a cat's-paw of to help the old Whigs to office, and then be left themselves out in the cold: when questions like this appeared in brilliant articles in papers of world-wide circulation, and were repeated in high-class Liberal papers, it became evident that the Govern-

ment would rest on an uneasy basis unless some lateral extension were carried out. Intelligent supporters therefore commended Mr. Merrifield's astuteness when it was announced that Mr. Bracton had accepted the Vice-Presidency of the Board of Commerce; while even those members of the Government who were disposed to hold their noses in the air and look askance at their new companion, soon came round to the same opinion on finding how great was the addition to their peace of mind, the whilome thorn in the Government bouquet being now transformed into quite a fragrant flower in the Government button-hole. Instead of being badgered themselves, they now had a badger of their own to snarl defiance from the Treasury tub at the Opposition and at gentlemen below the gangway, like another Diogenes, and quite as cynical. But when, taking advantage of the numerous changes which befell his Ministry, the Premier advanced Mr. Bracton to be Minister of Cultus and a Privy Councillor, people said Merrifield had gone too far, and that his strength in this respect would prove a weakness. Their fears were soon justified when the new Minister set to work in his trenchant style, pulling about the pillars of the Church. For a time, indeed, he carried a party with him. So long as he confined himself to the Establishment all went well: his select committee on the deans and chapters; his proposal to whitewash Westminster Abbey instead of wasting money on restoring the stonework; even his celebrated letter to the Archbishop, which set the *Parish Beadle*—organ of the High Church party—frantic; while these things went on the *Register* and the Nonconformists looked on approvingly. But when Mr. Bracton took charge of the Government Public Worship Bill, which enacted

that everybody should be required to attend church or chapel every Sunday morning; and when he explained that this provision would apply to every able-bodied subject, Dissenter as well as Churchman, then my new acquaintance found he had raised a regular hornet's nest about himself and the Government. Of the reception the right honourable gentleman met with when he went down to visit his constituents; how, when he endeavoured to obtain a hearing at the meeting and to point out that the Bill for the first time placed Dissenters on the same footing with Churchmen, he was yelled down by the indignant mob; how finally, after the platform had been invaded, a vote of want of confidence in their member—who held his ground among the roughs with dogged pluck—was unanimously carried, till finally the tumult was quelled by the arrival of the police; how, as indignation became general, explanations were offered in the House that it was not intended to enforce the Act, except in the case of women and children and such adult males as did not object to obey it; how, after all its leading provisions had been whittled away in committee, the Bill was eventually withdrawn amid derisive cheers on both sides of the House, and jubulations from all sections of the press; all this is matter of history. But Mr. Merrifield took the hint, and when the various Ministerial changes occurred to which reference has been made, the opportunity was seized to transfer the too zealous Minister to his present office. Let me add, however, that I found my new acquaintance a very good fellow—very different from what he was popularly supposed to be; intolerant of stupidity, indeed, but really anxious to save the public purse; who kept his cynicism for the outer world, and having now sown

his political wild oats, promised to develop into a useful and discreet public official.

Not, however, that we appeared to have many ideas in common on the matter just now in hand. "Of course you know what I have been sent to this shop for," he observed; "going down in the world, you see, this is, to become a mere Under-Secretary; although, to be sure, when the head of the department is in the Lords, it makes a difference. However, I have no doubt there is plenty to be done here."

I asked him what he thought of the office.

"Well, one public office is pretty much the same as another, I take it; only some have too many clerks, and others only just about enough. This is one of the first lot, I suspect; but I have not had time to go into the thing yet, for I am a new-comer, like yourself. But one must look about and see what there is to retrench. Plenty of room for that, I fancy. Thorowcome, you know, was on the building-up lay all the time he was here, so there is sure to be plenty of stuff to be pulled down, if you set about it."

"No doubt we ought to be on the look-out for all reductions that can properly be made. Anything superfluous is waste, and waste of public money is wicked. But the first thing is, I apprehend, to find out what you really do want, and arrange accordingly."

"Oh, as to that—although I don't profess to know much about military matters, which haven't been at all in my line—I fancy you have got pretty nearly everything you want in the way of an army, and a good deal more. Anyhow, I know Merrifield and Tommy Sinick will look for retrenchment from me. And, between ourselves, Burley is said to be a good man for that sort of thing. But, dear me,

it is nearly two o'clock, and I ought to have been on a committee of the House at twelve. Ta-ta! you will soon settle down into the ways of the place." And so saying, Mr. Bracton took his hat and hurried out of the room.

The next thing to do appeared to be to find my own room, to which accordingly I was conducted by a messenger whom I found waiting in the hall—a comfortable if somewhat dingy room, furnished with a writing-table, a bookcase, and a few chairs. On the table was a little bookstand, containing various editions of the 'Army List,' the 'Navy List,' 'Who's Who,' the 'London Directory,' and other periodicals of the same useful character. The drawers of the table I found on examination to be empty, except the top one on the right hand, which appeared to be a repository for spare half-sheets of notes and other scraps of paper—whence I inferred my predecessor must be a man of sound economic habits—a penknife, a stop, and a broken paper-cutter. While engaged in these investigations, the messenger entered with the *Dial* of the day—which, in the absence of an occupant of the room, he had been surreptitiously reading—and asking if I would not like some writing materials, presently returned with an assortment of that stout, glossy paper affected by Government officials, and last, but not least, some bundles of that useful but much-abused article, red-tape. But although thus provided with the sinews of war, no sound of battle came near me. All was as silent as the grave; and while walking up and down the room, amused and perplexed, I descried in the bookcase a copy of the 'Report of the Eighteenth Committee on the Organisation of the Artillery.' Truly here was a first glimpse of the sweets of

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information, I took my seat on the bench as before, and made my first Ministerial statement. Rising after each question, and taking off my hat gracefully, after approved manner, I had to state, in reply to the noble lord's question, that it is not in contemplation by her Majesty's Government to serve out bearskins to all volunteer corps of the same pattern

as those worn by the Guards; and again, making the important announcement that the question of supplying half-and-half instead of bitter ale to the troops in the West Indies was in course of investigation by a committee, whose report would be taken into consideration by the Secretary of State as soon as it was ready.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—UNFOLDING OF THE MYSTERIES.

Having thus donned official harness, I now set about applying myself seriously to work, and soon found that, as Roundhand had said, there was plenty to be done, if you only chose to do it. My first discovery was that the office was divided, or was supposed to be divided, into three main departments. First, the Personal, or Military Branch, which dealt with discipline, and so forth; but although nominally a branch of the office, and under the same roof, we kept it at a proper distance. It was a recognised principle of business, I found, in the other branches, never to let this one see their part of the work, and never to consult it about anything, if they could possibly avoid doing so. Next, the Store Branch, under the Storekeeper-General, Lieutenant-General Sir Mordaunt Burley, K.C.B., who also had not been very long appointed, and who, like myself, was intended to have a seat in Parliament, but had not been able to find one yet. Third, the Money Branch, under the Paymaster-General. But these names, I soon found, were quite delusive. I naturally supposed at first that, as Paymaster-General, I should have to pay everything, but it appeared that I merely had to do with the pay of the troops, which was a very different matter. All stores were paid for by the Storekeeper-General, and likewise all food and

supplies; and since the expenditure on these made up about three-fourths of the total army outlay, my functions were in reality much more limited than my title would imply. But, further, I had only to do with the bare pay of the troops. All allowances, travelling bills, and so forth, were dealt with by the Storekeeper-General; and as these comprised all the cases of difficulty which arose, they formed really a much more important branch of the pay department than the pay department itself. It is not easy to make mistakes about the amount of pay a soldier is entitled to; but as there were no specific rules about travelling charges or contingent items, but each case could be dealt with from an original point of view, according to the idiosyncrasies of the clerk whose hands it fell into, one travelling bill might afford scope for as much ingenuity in manipulation and references as twenty muster-rolls. In fact, the office, although nominally of three parts, virtually consisted of one. The Personal Branch was of little or no account, and the Money Branch of not much more; both had been swallowed up in the omnivorous Store Branch, to which even the district paymasters were subordinate. It is true that we took our share in snubbing and keeping down the Personal Branch, a duty which we never lost an occa-

sion of doing; and even as regards the Stores and Miscellaneous Expenditure we came upon the scene at a later period, it being our function, besides checking the pay of the troops, to audit the accounts of the whole department, so that we could nominally claim to sit upon the proceedings of the Store Branch; but inasmuch as they were the parties who authorised their own expenditure, this post-audit was, in fact, pretty much a matter of form.

This, however, was merely a theoretical distribution of work. The heads of the three branches were supposed to deal with the business arising out of them respectively, or as much of it as the permanent officials sent up to them, referring important cases to the Secretary of State, while the two Under Secretaries kept themselves generally informed of what went on. And if business would have only divided itself specifically in this fashion into three heads, the office might have worked away merrily enough, but unfortunately the facts were too strong for the organisers. You can't separate men from things, least of all soldiers from their arms, and clothes, and food. And in fact not a question arose, but the three branches all came into play. If it were a matter of fortifications, for example, the military people first of all had to say what was wanted, whereupon the Storekeeper-General cut in and made them show cause why anything whatever should be wanted, or at any rate why the thing should not be something altogether different from what was said to be wanted; why, for instance, four guns should not be mounted on the left face of the south ravelin of Fort Albert-Edward, instead of seven guns on the right face; and whether, having due regard to all the circumstances of the case, ten-inch smooth-bores, of which

there happened to be a large supply in store, would not do instead of twelve-inch rifled guns. For all the members of the S. G. Branch, as they used to be called, from the S. G. himself down to the junior copying-clerk, appeared to consider it to be their special mission to make the army use up its surplus stores; in fact the army, in their view, was deemed to exist mainly for this object, and they were constantly on the look-out for opportunities to get rid of these obsolete articles. The ten-inch smooth-bores, I remember, sat very heavy on the departmental stomach, and whenever a new ship was commissioned, a proposal used to go down to Whitehall to try this novel armament upon her. The Admiralty, however, which had a fine contempt for economy, laughed us to scorn, and even the engineers, who were usually the meekest of men and could be trampled upon to any extent, were obdurate on the subject of these smooth-bores for their fortifications.

Then again there were a lot of worn-out old Enfields, which were always being hawked about the country. We thought we had got rid of them on a certain militia regiment, and indeed we very nearly succeeded, but the lord-lieutenant of the county, the Duke of Kingston, who was a leading member of the Opposition, got scent of the matter, and made such a slashing speech in the House of Lords as set the whole S. G. Branch a-trembling, and even caused Lord Stowe to inquire into the matter. There was a batch of old saddles, too, which gave the department a moral indigestion. A committee of us, Burley, the Chief Deputy-Storekeeper, and myself, went down to Woolwich to look at them, coming back of course much the wiser; and after trying in vain to foist them on to some yeomanry corps in the north, event-

ually I think we handed them over to the India Board. India, indeed, was in our eyes a sort of military dusthole, into which could be shot all rubbish in the way of obsolete arms and equipments, with this difference, however, that everything supplied in that quarter used always to be most handsomely paid for.

In this sort of work the S. G. Branch had the pull over us. We had not the power of initiation which they possessed, and which they certainly worked to advantage, for the British soldier could not live without food and clothes, so that the S. G., or his officials in his name, could come down upon him at every point, making the unfortunate man show cause why he should not have boots served out which he could not walk in, why he should not go to Canada in light flannels, and take an extra thick greatcoat with him to India, and so on *ad infinitum*. So with the cavalry and artillery, there was not a thing that was wanted or a thing to be done that some zealous official, young or old, could not make the subject of a query—always in the interests of the public service and to save expense—and a query paper once set agoing, it gathered matter round it like a rolling snowball, and quite a pretty little volume would often be made out of a matter about which less experienced officials might have thought it impossible to cover even a sheet of foolscap. I remember one very good illustration of this, the first that came under my notice, where the Controller at Drymouth having purchased a wheelbarrow, it was discovered that there were several spare wheelbarrows in store at Liffeytown. Here at once was a case, for it was one of Burley's cardinal rules, founded on obvious grounds of economy, that no one should buy stores of any kind without first inquiring of "the De-

partment" whether any such were available at other stations. Accordingly "the Department" came down on the local Controller like a sledgehammer, calling on him to show cause why he should not make good the cost of the wheelbarrow himself, &c. &c.; and that zealous but incautious official did not get out of the scrape under three or four quires of foolscap, and I will be bound to say will take good care never to buy a wheelbarrow or anything else for the future on his own responsibility. But this case, of which the S. G. Branch, from Sir Mordaunt Burley downwards, were justly proud, was really due to the intelligence of a quite subordinate clerk, one Mr. Trubbell Soame, a very rising young official, unequalled at ferreting out irregularities, and lately promoted to be Burley's private secretary.

But on the other hand we were not wanting for our part to the cause of economy and good administration. If the Paymaster-General came on the scene later than the Storekeeper-General, he could be very effective when he did come. If the S. G. Branch had the pull over us in being able to initiate, yet after they had had their fling at a case, they were bound to hand it over to our Branch, in order—as the Warrant which defined our duties expressed it—"that the matter may be considered in its financial bearings." And consider it in its financial bearings we did, and no mistake; moreover, the same clause gave us a claim to cut in at any point, for there is hardly anything that has not its financial aspect if you can only discover it. Accordingly, what between the S. G. and the P. G. (as in the slang of the office the functionary whose post I had the honour to fill was styled), the British army was capitally looked after. Perhaps the triumph of ingenuity was illustrated by the Cinque Port court-martial, which occasioned

quite an excitement in the department. It might be thought that a court-martial if anything would have been beyond our line, but nevertheless we were able to bring that famous clause of the Warrant, "in order that the matter may be considered, &c." to bear with great effect; for not only did the president of the Court purchase a packet of quill-pens at three-and-ninence from a local stationer, but he had a witness brought up from a neighbouring village by a one-horse fly, whereas it would have been cheaper by eighteenpence to send him round by rail, *via* Cockayne-on-Sea and St. Augustine. The first, of course, was a clear case. W. O. Circular No. ²²⁴⁶₁₉, prescribes distinctly that presidents of courts-martial shall indent for stationery on the nearest controller. So we handed the case over to the S. G. Branch, when Burley, who went into it himself, discovered by means of returns obtained from twenty-seven stations in the United Kingdom, that the average price of quill-pens was only two-and-eightpence, wherefore the purchaser was clearly liable for the difference. The other point was a more doubtful one, because the president argued—and the general commanding the district supported him—that although the railway fare might be cheaper than the fly, still the witness would have had to stop eight hours at each junction, and would have put in a claim for refreshment expenses. We declined, however, to recognise indirect claims of this sort; and when the president finally lost his temper in his reply to our thirteenth letter of reference, we triumphantly terminated the correspondence by handing him over to the Personal Branch to be reprimanded for disrespect.

If the S. G. Branch had their Trubbell Soame, we, for our part, could boast our O'Verduit, a young

Irishman, and a splendid sample of the effect of open competition on the public service; and the two branches regarded these promising officials as their respective champions, and used, so to speak, to pit them one against the other. The wheelbarrow case was very highly thought of in the office, and justly held by the office to reflect great credit on the former; but O'V. had been known to find out thirty-six objections to a single contingent bill for three pound ten, a feat admitted to be quite unsurpassed in the annals of the department.

But these cases were comparatively simple. It was not often that a case could be finally disposed of in one branch, for stores and finance overlap at every point, and then we used to keep the ball rolling in splendid style, sending the case to and fro from one side of the office to the other, minuting and counter-minuting, till it often became quite a puzzle to know what it was all about. Almost the first case that came before me was one of this sort. It appeared that a battery of horse-artillery marched from Aldershot to Woolwich, with orders to halt for the night at Hounslow, and a supply of straw and firewood was sent down beforehand to that place accordingly in a waggon from London, in compliance with the commanding officer's indent (W. O. Form, No. ²⁴¹¹₁). So far well; but when the battery reached Hounslow the encamping ground was all under water from the recent heavy rains, and the commander determined, instead of passing the night on the swampy heath, to push on at once to Woolwich, where the battery arrived by night-fall after a fifty-mile march, and was much applauded by its comrades for the feat. This irregularity might have been condoned, but unfortunately the battery had left its forage behind, and a very pretty

correspondence arose about it. The Money Branch proposed that the articles should be placed in store at Windsor—the nearest station—for reissue when required; but Burley and his people, who were always for reducing surplus stores, wanted to have it sold by auction; and the correspondence between the branches might be going on still, but that the Assistant-Controller who was sent down to Hounslow to report on the case, brought back word that the articles were not forthcoming; the straw, it was supposed, had been blown away in a gale, while an old woman had been seen walking across the common with a bundle of sticks bearing a suspicious resemblance to the firewood in question. And as a final result the gallant commandant (who was no other than my friend Cobbe Smith) would certainly have had to pay for the articles out of his own pocket, if I had not come to the rescue. The matter was brought up for discussion at our weekly board meeting, when Lord Stowe appeared disposed to support Burley's view for enforcing the retrenchment, showing that both in the Domestic Department and the Pauper Commission they were always guided by precedent; but Bracton took my side, and said it would be an awkward case to defend if any questions should be asked about it in the House; and as Burley was not in Parliament we carried our point.

Although my action in this case was no doubt regarded by the office as evincing a dangerous laxity in the audit line, and to stamp me as a rash young man, still the victory over the S. G.'s was relished, for hitherto they had been having it all their own way. In fact, my branch felt over-matched, and in consequence despondent; for what chance had they, when serving under an ignorant young fellow like myself, against the

S. G. Branch headed by an experienced official like Burley, with an insatiable capacity for interfering with other people's business, and centralising all authority in himself? Sir Mordaunt Burley, after holding throughout his career a variety of small official posts, more or less connected with looking after and giving trouble to other people, had first made his great reputation by his celebrated inquiry into the colonial military establishments, when he effected a great economy by selling off the guns and stores to be found all over the world, and organised a fine department, with a secretary, a registrar, five first and ten second class clerks, to check any purchases for the future. It is true this department collapsed immediately on his return home, and people were ill-natured enough to say that it cost more than the stores which had been sold; and Sir Mordaunt might have remained unemployed but for his celebrated series of letters to the *Dial*, asserting that at least five millions a-year might be retrenched in the military expenditure of the country by proper management. It was quite plain what that meant; and a man who could say this, and apparently was prepared to go on saying it an indefinite number of times, was evidently not of a sort to be left out in the cold; and accordingly the opportunity had been taken of a vacancy in our office to put a stop to the *Dial* correspondence, which threatened to become troublesome.

Against such a man, then, who moreover, had several months' start, an untrained official was deemed to have no chance. The unequal nature of the struggle was indeed typified by the contrast between my empty table, and the piles of returns, reports, and statements I found on Burley's when I paid him my visit on that first day. Yes, he had said

on that occasion, it was indeed a great business, a very large task, and a very complicated work, looking as he spoke complacently round at the contents of his table, and the baskets and the boxes, all stuffed full of papers, which littered the floor, much in the same way as a chemical philosopher might show off his laboratory to an admiring but ignorant young lady, as if to say, "Wonderful, isn't it, that anybody should understand all about these things? Yet I do, although I won't attempt to explain them to you; they would be quite beyond your powers of apprehension."

Burley, then, was the man looked up to by the office generally, and the difference between us in general estimation was increased by my mode of setting to work. Although I had interfered in this particular case of Cobbe Smith's retrenchment, my usual practice was to avoid expressing any opinions on the papers that came before me, but, while requiring that everything should be sent up, contenting myself with reading them carefully, and seeking personal explanation on points not clear from the different clerks, and finally supporting the proposal put forward in each case for disposing of it by attaching my initials. And while I took this passive part, the experienced Burley was making play at a tremendous pace, sending out blank forms broadcast throughout the army to be filled up, and calling for returns right and left. One in particular was considered a triumph of ingenuity,—a daily return of the market price of every kind of food and supplies at every station in the United Kingdom. These were laid on Burley's table every morning, and a staff of six extra clerks was sanctioned to overhaul them and strike an average. "The saving will cover the outlay over and over again," said Burley, when getting Lord

Stowe to sanction the application to the Treasury for these clerks; "this plan will put all the local disbursers on the *qui vive* when they see how closely all their proceedings are watched. It is sure to prevent irregularities, and lead to economy. Why, it was only last week that we found out that the controller at Liffeytown was charging three-halfpence for eggs when they were being quoted for three-farthings at Brogeda. Think of the saving in this item only! Depend upon it, my lord, if you want economy, you must hold a firm grasp over things, and let men feel that they are looked after. And you can't have real control without having the accounts and returns on your own table, to check with your own eyes."

It was in this view that he organised his Movable Store Examination Branch, to which every storekeeper in the army sent up a weekly return, and no one was allowed to purchase stores until it was proved that the articles in demand could not be procured from some other station. This arrangement led to a lively movement of dry goods about the country, pickaxes flowing from Pigtown to Paymouth, with a return ebb of barrack chairs and picketing chains, and other miscellaneous articles. The troops used to grumble at the delay in getting what they wanted, but the office did not mind that; and when our branch, now very mild and subdued, ventured to hint that the carriage of these stores up and down the kingdom must cost something, we were told that there was nothing so costly as keeping up stores that were not wanted. More-over Burley wrote a minute suggesting that the duty of conveying these stores from one port to another might usefully be placed on the Navy, and proposing that before any of her Majesty's ships left harbour, the captain should inquire of the

local controller whether he had any stores to ship for the next port. In this way, said Burley, the cruising grounds of the Channel squadron might be made to conform to the interests of the public service, and an important reform effected without any charge to the State. However, the Admiralty sent us back such a letter that he did not press the point.

Meanwhile Burley was rather a popular fellow in the office, for all this work set a lot of promotion going. What with this new Daily Price Current Sub-Branch of six clerks, with young Meddell (a fellow of infinite persistence) at the head of it on a step of acting rank: four clerks extra for the Movable Store

Examination Branch, put in charge of McMuddell, an officer of long standing in the office, whose influence indeed pervaded every part of it, and seven clerks for the additional correspondence arising out of Burley generally, the S. Gs., who got the lion's share of these good things, had a fine time of it; while my branch, which heretofore had justly prided itself on receiving more letters than any other—that is, if you counted pay-sheets and muster-rolls among the letters—was now left altogether behind in the race, and felt, as I have said, proportionally depressed, having evidently no confidence in me, but looking to Burley as the real head of affairs.

CHAPTER XXIX.—DOMESTIC.

Meanwhile, this close attention to official duty, however inadequate the result, involved a considerable change in the mode of home-life. Hitherto my Parliamentary engagements had not interfered with this, and our time had been passed much in the same way as that of all the other idle people in London. A young couple with enough to live on, especially if the wife is lady-like and pretty, and the husband a gentleman and an M.P., may soon have pretty much their choice of society, and as the season advanced we found ourselves floating on the tide of fashionable dissipation, the days and nights consumed in the stereotyped occupations which do duty for amusement, the mornings in trying to overtake the night's sleep lost; a sort of life fascinating enough at first, but unspeakably tedious as it went on. I confess, therefore, it was with a great sense of relief that I could now plead official engagements as an excuse for withdrawing from the varied monotony of this perpetual

racket. To be sure one had not to say very much in the House, but it was necessary to be there a great deal, especially for divisions, and at any rate it was impossible to go down to the War Office of a morning fresh for business if you had been up all the night standing about in stuffy drawing-rooms. So we withdrew to a certain extent from the gay world, my little wife being indeed more in need of rest than I was. The morning ride could still be generally managed, or, if I was kept away, Tom Strickland and one of his sisters would generally call to escort Eva and Sybil—for the latter had now joined us; while the necessity for making contingent appointments for meeting each other, whenever the ladies set off to go anywhere alone, added a zest to the business of life.

Another change made was that Eva should now take over the house-keeping, for so far the transfer of functions contemplated at the beginning of the season had not been

carried out. I ought, no doubt, to have looked after the matter more closely, and helped my little wife in her first efforts, but somehow the time passed so quickly in engagements, real or fancied, that things had been allowed to take care of themselves; and attention was first called to the state of the case by a letter from St. Leger & Gernell, the Leatherby bankers, apprising me that my account with them was considerably overdrawn. Whereupon I asked Eva for her cheque-book, which, however, did not throw much light on the matter, inasmuch as she had not filled up the counterfoils.

"My dear Eva, what is the use of keeping the cheque-book in this way? Here is ever so much money paid away, and no means of telling who it has gone to!"

Eva looked very sad over it. "I am very sorry," she said, "but I did not understand about this filling up the—this bit of paper that remains after you tear off the cheque. I thought it would not matter, so long as the money was properly paid; besides the people seemed quite satisfied."

"My dear Eva, you must have seen me making out cheques by the dozen, and might have learned by this time how it was done. However, I suppose you have got the receipts for all the payments, so we shall be able to find out in that way what has become of the money."

"I think I have, at any rate for most of them," Eva replied, and going to the writing-table, she turned out the contents of the drawer; notes, invitations, programmes of dances, a good many bills, and a few tradesmen's receipts. "Here is everything I have got," she said; "I always put everything about business into this drawer, so that I can find it again if I want it."

"And a very business-like arrangement it certainly is; but, my dear Eva, these receipts won't explain the overdrawing of the Leatherby account; my balance at Gernell's was about three times as much as these come to. Are you sure you took receipts for all the bills you have paid?"

Eva thought she had, but was not quite clear on the subject, so there was nothing to be done but to await the banker's account showing to whom the cheques had been paid. The account, however, when it came two days later, did not throw much light on the subject, for all the cheques were charged as paid to bearer, and so there was nothing to be done but to get Eva to guess out the items from the amounts. Unfortunately mere inspection of these figures did not throw much light on the subject, for they were almost all for round sums, mostly twenty pounds.

"I confess I can't understand this account, Eva: surely the butcher's and baker's bills can't amount to exactly twenty pounds every month. There must be some mistake here. Come, Eva, look at this account, and try and recollect what it is all about."

Eva looked puzzled, and remained silent for some time, poring over the account; at last she brightened up.

"Of course! now I recollect all about it. I didn't give these cheques to the butcher or the baker, or these people. I gave them to cook, and she paid them. That's what it was."

"I think it would perhaps have been better if you had paid them yourself direct. However, provided they get their money all right it does not much matter. But how about the receipts? Hasn't the cook made them over to you?"

"I don't think the tradespeople

send in accounts on pieces of paper. They send in books. That is quite the regular plan, I know; Mrs. Herries used to have her tradesmen's books—little dirty red books—and so has Mrs. Lowder." And as this coincidence struck her, Eva looked quite happy.

"You are quite right, my love, only see that they sign for payments in their books, just as other people do on their bills. But, after all, this does not explain why the money should have been all in round numbers. We can't have eaten exactly twenty pounds' worth of meat every month, or exactly the same value in groceries."

"Why no, of course not. But, don't you see, I gave cook these cheques, and she paid the different people."

"And put the difference in her pocket?"

"No, Charlie; how absurd you are! She wanted money to pay for the things she got herself. You can't get everything from the grocer's, you know."

"What things?"

"Oh, really I can't remember at this moment; but she mentions a number of things she wants when she comes for orders—dusters, and pudding-cloths, and brandy for the puddings, and all sorts of things."

"But, even taking in this miscellaneous account of the cook's, I still don't see why our expenditure should come out exactly at these round sums."

"Oh, how tiresome you are, Charlie! Of course I don't mean that. But cook says her account comes to so much, and that she wants some money to go on with, so I give her a cheque, and she keeps anything there is over till next time."

"Well, but does she furnish you with an account of these compli-

cated transactions? are all these balances carried forward and brought on, and all these mysterious items for brandy, and pudding-cloths, and so forth?"

"She does not keep an account exactly, but she tells me all about it when she comes for orders; I can't say I can follow her a bit, she counts so fast: but I try to look wise as if I understood her, and I suppose it is all right."

I sent for the cook and asked to see the tradesmen's books, which, of course, were not then available, but would be sent for. About her own accounts it seemed useless to speak, as nothing could be inferred about them in the absence of the others. As I walked thoughtfully up and down the room, while Eva sat furtively watching me, I doubt not she fancied I was silently blaming her. In truth I blamed myself a great deal more for so inconsiderately placing this burden of housekeeping upon her, without giving any help or advice, or watching its progress as time went on. But I had always been busy in a certain way, so far that every hour brought engagements or occupation of some sort, and as nothing had happened to call for notice, things had been allowed to take their course. And thus already our housekeeping had got into a mess, and the fault was mine, for I might have known exactly what would happen if it were left to my guileless little wife's unaided inexperience.

But clearly we must turn over a new leaf, for things could not go on for ever in this way. And prudence whispered the wisest course. Beauty, and grace, and amiability would not alone suffice for a perfect household. If we are to have a well-ordered home, my little wife must take her share of the family duties, and learn the ways of ordinary prudent.

housekeeping. So young as she is, so easily moulded her pliant disposition, these habits should not be difficult to acquire. Clearly, then, the proper course is to help her in this matter, till she can run alone; to do things for her till she can do them for herself. This is what I ought to have done during the winter at Leatherby, instead of taking all the work myself to save Eva trouble, putting off the evil day. However, there ought to be no more procrastination. It would be a terrible nuisance, no doubt, especially just now when I was just putting on official harness, but the trouble would lessen daily as Eva came to understand these things, and there was no reason why in a year or two she should not be able to manage just as well as other housekeepers.

Such were the promptings of prudence while I paced the room after the cook's retreat to the lower regions. But the prospect of spending an hour a-day over small housekeeping details seemed unutterably dismal, while pseudo-conscience whispered a caution against giving up so much time to petty private business. Better do one thing properly than attempt perfection all round. The office needed all my time, if business there was ever to be mastered. What are a few pounds saved in small household economies if saved at a sacrifice of the great work in hand? This specious reasoning prevailed, and the upshot was an arrangement came to that Eva should not be bothered with accounts at all, but should bring all her bills to me and I would discharge them. But neither of us was really satisfied at heart with the plan. I knew that I was thus encouraging my little wife's besetting infirmity, and that we were making a false step at the threshold of our married life. She too had, in more or less dim sort, a sense of

duty evaded—of her scheme of life being incomplete. But if I was weak enough to take the way that promised most present ease, what more natural than that she should wish to follow it? Yet as I walked down to the office I was oppressed with a conscious feeling that we had taken another step towards two separate paths in life, while in the due avoidance which henceforth occurred of all talk about household business might be traced the origin of that feeling of reserve on her part which now and again began to manifest itself.

Needs not be said that the new scheme really came to nought. A busy official, who tries to combine a life of work with one of pleasure, with all its engagements and distractions, every hour engaged in some way or other, never does find time to look after his private business, much less his wife's; and beyond drawing cheques when Eva came with bills, and occasionally looking at my banker's book, the squaring of accounts, including those of the cook, was indefinitely deferred; how many bills remained unpaid I did not inquire.

Eventually the cook's case was disposed of in another way. It was on the occasion of an eventful dinner-party. Our little dinner-parties, indeed, were not uniformly successful, for, owing perhaps to my own irregularity of hours induced by Parliamentary life, the household had already got somehow out of gear, and dinner could seldom be depended upon within an hour of the appointed time; while Eva, on my remonstrating, said cook looked at her so strangely she was afraid to go down to the kitchen and find fault. I, too, felt ashamed to make a fuss, being so often unpunctual myself; besides, it would be inexcusable to be out of temper when both Sybil

and Eva were ready to sit with imperturbable patience in the drawing-room, divinely dressed, for any length of time, as if dinner were a matter of supreme indifference; ready indeed, if it was an opera night, to start off when the carriage came round without waiting for dinner at all. If these two fragile creatures could do without food, it would be disgraceful in me, a strong man and a soldier, to be put out by such a trifling matter; and except that occasionally a dish or two ordered did not make its appearance at all, being reported to be spoiled, the cook, when she did send the dinner up, generally sent it up well.

One rather absurd incident occurred about this time. It had been arranged that we should give two small dinner-parties each of eight persons on succeeding days. Coming home rather late on the first evening, I hurried up-stairs to dress, and was descending to the drawing-room when the servant stopped me on the landing to say that there were fifteen ladies and gentlemen in the drawing-room, including Miss Barton. Well, why should there not be? I asked, forgetting for the moment the details of the programme. Because (if I pleased) mistress had ordered the table to be laid for eight, and everything had been got ready accordingly. Then what had happened became clear. However, under the circumstances, there was nothing to be done but to tell the man to lengthen the table as quickly as possible, and entering the drawing-room to endeavour to amuse the company till dinner was announced, which event happened about fifty minutes after the proper time. The bill of fare proved of course somewhat inadequate, and the attendance also; but when I explained to those near me that, in fact, we had expected to have the pleasure of

seeing them by instalments, but that there had evidently been a mistake in the date of the invitations, the explanation was received very good-humouredly by everybody except old Lady Grampus, who evidently considered that an affront had been put upon her, and was disposed to sniff throughout the evening, more especially when she learnt what was the nature of Mr. Herries' profession, for he and his wife were among those who came on the wrong day. At the other end of the table they appeared to get on wonderfully well under the circumstances, owing probably to the presence of Tom Strickland, who was a capital talker, although Eva was dimly conscious that something had gone wrong. When we came to discuss the matter later in the evening, after every one had left, Eva was sure that she had named the right days. At any rate, I had not the heart to scold her.

The other misadventure, which led to the cook's retirement above referred to, was a more serious one. There was again a small party impending, when coming home a few minutes before the dinner-hour I was kept waiting some time at the door, neither knocker or bell producing any response, till bethinking me that I had the latch-key in my pocket I let myself in. Eva was in the drawing-room looking excited and anxious. "Oh, Charlie!" she cried, "I am so glad you have come back—cook's in a fit. She looked very strange in the afternoon when I went into the kitchen, and didn't seem to understand what was said to her, and just now Annette came running up to say that she had fallen down in a fit. Poor thing, it seems so dreadful! whatever is to be done?"

Such was the account delivered in broken accents as we descended

to the lower regions, Barrett the man, it was explained, having gone to fetch a doctor.

The scene in the kitchen was certainly enough to alarm a young housekeeper, especially on the eve of a dinner-party. The table was covered with the litter incidental to the occasion: on one side stood the respectable widow who had been engaged temporarily during a vacancy in the scullery department, holding on to a chair and staring us gravely in the face; on the other was Annette gazing horror-stricken at the stout figure of the cook, who lay recumbent as regards her legs and body, her head and shoulders supported by the dresser, breathing stertorously, the silence broken only by the click of the jack, which bore a saddle of mutton pursuing its mechanical rotation in neglect before the fire.

The nature of the situation was of course readily apprehended, even without the clue afforded by the spirituous vapour which pervaded the place. The widow lady, indeed, when appealed to, declined to afford explanation. Her mouth opened several times, as if about to give utterance, but apparently she thought better of it, and continued to regard us with a smiling stare, looking like a seedy waxwork figure, and holding on steadily by the chair. The cook was past explanation. On being shaken she opened her eyes, but speedily relapsed into slumber.

"No doubt about it," I remarked, rising from the kneeling position in which I had conducted my diagnosis of the case. "The woman's dead——"

"Dead!" cried Eva.

"Dead drunk, I was going to say, my dear, if you had allowed me to finish my sentence."

The situation was sufficiently absurd, albeit disgusting into the bar-

gain. The widow was sufficiently composed to be guided, with Barrett's help when he returned with the doctor (whose aid we did not require) to the door, whence having been assisted down the steps, still smiling fixedly, we left her to pursue her way homeward, an operation which she effected slowly by means of the area-railings, although apparently much embarrassed by the frequent gaps in their friendly support. The worthy soul in the excitement of parting forgot her little basket, which we afterwards found in a corner covered with a rusty black apron, containing selected samples of the bill of fare for the day in the form of salmon, lamb-cutlets, fruit and vegetables, with a packet of tea and about a pound of butter thrown in by way of make-weight. The cook was not so easily disposed of, but Barrett and I dragged her into the scullery, where she was left to pursue her slumbers in peace. I could not help thinking at the time that if old Burley had chanced to see me thus engaged, he would have considered it a moral triumph ever afterwards, and that I should not like to have been discovered even by little Roundhand, my private secretary, who was coming to dinner. Meanwhile it was too late to send notice to our guests, and all that could be done was for Barrett to tell the coachman as each carriage drove up, that the party was unavoidably put off through sudden sickness in the household; while Eva, by writing by that night's post to each guest to say the sick person was the cook, anticipated the fire of anxious inquiries next morning. Let me conclude this episode by adding that the cook took herself off next morning before anybody else was up, and was never heard of again, when, as may be supposed, all the tradesmen came to say that

they had never been paid anything, and certainly their books were innocent of receipts. Of course the delinquent might have been found if I had set the police to work, and prosecuted into the bargain; but all this would have involved trouble and time, to say nothing of publicity. I did not fancy the notion of Eva being cross-examined in the witness box upon her method of household management, and after all it might have been difficult to prove the payment of the cheques to the retiring official; so, like many another of my fellow-British subjects, I

shirked my duty as a citizen, paid the bills, and let the matter drop. Looking over the books cursorily, it appeared that Eva and myself must have consumed on the average about three pounds of butcher's meat and a couple of quarts of milk daily, and that Sybil's appetite was equally healthy.

Eva was greatly discomposed by this incident, and very disheartened and depressed in spirits about it for some days; but the real blame I knew was mine, for placing on her all at once a burden greater than she could bear.

CHAPTER XXX.—THE OFFICE FINDS SOMETHING TO DO.

Meanwhile, official matters went on pretty much as usual. General politics became interesting towards the end of the session, it being a nice question, and hotly debated in the press and the clubs and over London dinner-tables, whether we (the Government) should pull through the session. The general impression seemed to be that we should not, or that if we did our longer stay of office would be due to the forbearance of the Opposition, or, to speak more strictly, to their indifference or disinclination to succeed us, the fact being that parties and opinions had now got mixed up together in miscellaneous fashion, and that the Opposition had no specific principle on hand on which to build up a definite platform. But things being in this state the time was not very propitious for raising any great army questions. The policy of the Government was clearly to avoid big subjects which the Opposition might take hold of, and so the various muddy elements which had been stirred up during previous sessions were now allowed to sink to the bot-

tom of the administrative river, leaving a clear stream of routine to run undisturbed above. And Lord Stowe was quite the man for the occasion. He made indeed a speech in the House of Lords in regular bow-wow style, about the great importance of the department committed to his care, and the anxious consideration he was giving to the subject of the best mode of following out the path of army reform entered upon by his predecessor, Mr. Thorowcome, the loss of whose services to the country at this juncture could hardly be over estimated; how, finally, he must claim the indulgence of their lordships and the country during the time necessary for making himself thoroughly familiar with the various details of this great branch of the Administration. Listening to this speech, I thought that the looked-for opportunity was about to come at last. Here were the hour and the man. I should now have my coveted chance of pulling the administrative wires. But looking at Bracton, who was sitting beside me on the steps of the throne, I noticed that this ex-

perienced official was smiling sarcastically with his tongue in his cheek, while an expression escaped him in undertone which sounded very much like "darned old humbug." And I confess that my heart sank within me when our chief, in reply to the question of a noble lord on Opposition benches, said that the Government, in consideration of the great expense attending them, estimated by that distinguished official, Sir Mordaunt Burley, to amount to £57,666, 14s. 8d., and considering also that great experience had already been acquired by the troops from the outlay on previous occasions, did not propose to carry out any autumnal manœuvres during the present year.

This was the first intimation we understrappers had been given on the subject, although Bracton whispered to me that he had guessed as much. But the Government in throwing out this sop to the economists, miscalculated the extent of public feeling on the subject. Interest in army affairs generally might have died away, but people had got to look on autumnal manœuvres as an institution, and such an outcry was raised by the press of both parties, the *Dial* taking the lead, that Bracton very soon received instructions to announce in the Commons that it was determined to carry them out, and that the great open country of Arrowdown in Yewcestershire had been selected for the scene of operations.

Then began a scene of wild energy in our establishment in Pall Mall. Weeks before the time appointed for the mimic campaign, while the troops were resting peacefully in their quarters, all unconscious of the interest being taken on their behalf, while all the generals and staff officers in the kingdom still remained in anxious expectancy

whether or not they should be selected for commands, we in Pall Mall were hard at work, reporting, minuting, telegraphing, estimating, doing everybody else's work in fact, and our own a great many times over. Burley especially was in his element. Having learnt that the Quartermaster-General's office had sent down some staff officers to survey the ground, Burley thereupon despatched a full Controller and three assistants to the scene of action to report on the resources of the district, and the best mode of procuring supplies; and when the simple people of those remote parts saw this second body of officers careering in handsome uniforms over the country, they were quite puzzled to know which of the two were the "real soldiers," being finally disposed, however, to give the preference to the controllers, who came out much the stronger of the two in the way of caparisoned chargers and servants. Next came the question how the supplies were to be furnished. Some one in the office ventured to suggest that it might not be a bad plan to allow the local staff to purchase the required supplies on the spot. Yewcestershire contained over half a million of people, so that although Arrowdown was a rather wild spot there ought not to be much difficulty in feeding the extra twenty thousand or so who would be there on the occasion. But Burley was down at once sharply on this officious person, and proved to demonstration in a minute of forty-seven paragraphs, with an appendix of several pages of tabular figures, collected from his Daily Price Current Reports, and to compile which four extra clerks had been sanctioned for three weeks at eight-and-sixpence per diem—charge debited to vote 17 of the army estimates, "Head, Movement of Troops—

Subhead, Miscellaneous;" he showed conclusively, I say, from this array of facts and figures, that meat could be laid down on the Yewcestershire uplands by contract from London at 3.746 farthings a pound cheaper than it could be bought at Stamp-ton market, whereby a saving would accrue during the manœuvres of £1152, 8s. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. He might have added that there would be a still further saving by dispensing with the manœuvres altogether.

It was only natural that my people—the P. G. Branch—should feel rather disgusted at being left out of all the fun, for we had neither uniforms nor chargers among us, and no excuse for interfering. Rusteen, the head clerk, suggested that we should not be doing our duty if we did not do something also, and urged that this was a case clearly contemplated by the warrant—clause about considering the matter from a financial point of view, &c.—and that we ought at least to send down a couple of clerks to watch proceedings; but the proposal fell through.

Meanwhile the other side—by which I mean the S. G. Branch—were making great play. The contracts for the food and forage required during the manœuvres were all completed, and a really beauti-

ful scheme laid down for their distribution. A large chart was first prepared (compiled from the Ordnance Survey, three intelligent young Engineer officers being brought into the office for the purpose), with all the railway lines laid down, and little coloured squares filled in at the different junctions through which the troops were to pass on their way to the manœuvres, blue representing mutton; brown, bread; yellow, corn; and so on. The contractor had a copy of this, the original being kept on Burley's table. The object of the chart will be at once apparent. A few hours before the troops were due to arrive, say at Yewcester, the local control officer would telegraph to the office in Pall Mall, the office would telegraph to the contractor, and the contractor would send off the supplies by the next train, so that, as Burley said, rubbing his hands—as he explained the nature of the map to Lord Stowe, who had invited all the heads of departments to come into his room to look at it—"so that the troops will get their bread hot and hot, and their meat fresh and fresh, and the department can thus keep a real, an active, an effective control, my lord, over this important branch of the public expenditure."

GLIMPSES OF THE FUTURE.

CHAPTER I.

As I am a very matter-of-fact man, and have myself frequently refused to accept well-attested anecdotes because they contained something of the marvellous, I shall not insist on every reader feeling as awe-struck as I was by the adventure which I am going to relate. Those who choose may use proviso and exception as to the character of the influence to which I was subject, and are quite welcome to "explain away" the puzzling part of the story. I only wish that I could explain it away to my own satisfaction, for it makes me very uncomfortable at times; and, indeed, I am taking the public into my confidence, in the hope that some shrewd person may satisfy me as to everything being explicable by common-sense and natural agencies. But I do hope that I may be implicitly trusted as regards the facts which I shall state. They, at least, have been carefully recorded, and I will answer for their correctness in every particular. Here is my story.

I hold an appointment in a public office in London, and, being a bachelor, have hitherto found that I could get on pretty comfortably on my income; although of late years I have heard loud complaints from my married brothers in pens and pounce as to the smallness of the pay, and although I have felt occasionally that a more liberal salary would have been convenient. However, I can't, you know, make it appear that I am very badly used when Hatfield manages to keep, and tolerably respectably too—prudent, steady fellow, Hatfield!—a wife and ten children on the same income; and Biddulph, who has

not, I believe, a sixpence of private means, does with a like sum most creditably support a sick wife, who has always a doctor in pay, five young ones getting into their teens, and his mother and sister to boot. If he hadn't his mother and sister, B. says he must have kept a nurse for his wife and a housekeeper, so they don't increase his expenses, which is a very amiable way of putting it: indeed, Biddulph is a good, honest, unpretending fellow. Well, these examples, and some others hardly less strong, of what the salary can accomplish, rather preclude growls from me, and, as I said, I managed to get along, and have done so for some years, for I am a—well, a middle-aged man, though the thing is open to dispute, and I don't always call myself so; only, as I wish to be scrupulously candid on this occasion, I decline to take the benefit of the doubt. As I am not a politician, nor much of a reading man, have little taste for sport (I don't mind skating now and then, or firing into a flock of starlings in a hard Christmas), and am not very keen or sharp at whist, or very energetic in any way, I set myself down as an uninteresting person, and feel that I am greatly indebted to those who are my friends, and who don't object to my company; because I rather like being quietly sociable. After giving this account of myself, I cannot help asking, rather by way of protest than from hope of getting an answer from the powers appealed to, why on earth such a humdrum person as I am should be tormented with queer sights and revelations which I don't understand and never desired; and

why, when there are so many imaginative people in the world who would revel in telling such a story, all the trouble of it should be imposed on poor me. However, my luck led me into the realm of fancy, as the poets call it, and this was how the thing happened.

The little holiday which I can procure I spend at the seaside, or in the country, according to the season. For several summers I have gone down to Scarborough in July, not because I am very much in love with the place, but because Luscombe and his party go there regularly, and I, having once met them there by accident, now go there annually to meet them by arrangement. Luscombe and I suit each other. We are both constitutionally slow men, while we both know well the necessity of attending to business. We are both smokers, and so we idle away our holidays without much bodily or mental effort, and yet are company for each other, and, I fancy, enjoy our leisure as much as most people. I have once or twice visited Luscombe at his place in the North Riding in the winter, but it is at Scarborough that I have seen most of him, and it was at Scarborough that we were together this summer. The Luscombes come over in great force—that is to say, they make a great display at the seaside. This they can quite afford to do, and therefore, I suppose they have the right. For my own part I would rather do things more quietly when I go out simply for a little rest and relaxation, and so I think would Luscombe, if the truth were told; but he is a very indulgent husband, and the style they live in isn't irksome to Mrs. Luscombe at any rate. Every year they are a little grander, no doubt because their gains have been increasing. This summer they have green and scarlet liveries, and gold lace, and a coachman in a wig; there is also an awful coat of arms

on the carriage, with devices of extraordinary complexity. In a large house on the Esplanade they have great enjoyment of the season when the weather is fine. I lodge in another house two or three doors off; I would rather have my own quarters, you know, although I spend nearly all my time with some of their party—the most with Luscombe—but some with the ladies, and some even with the children, whom I can stand very well when I know it isn't for a long time. My apartments are on the first floor. There are other lodgers in the house, about whom I should not think of troubling myself, only there is one who was there last year, and is there still, on the ground-floor, and I can't help knowing his name, for it is printed large on a slip of white paper, pinned to a baize door, which covers the wooden one. He is Dr. Manassé. I was destined to know more about him than that, but, for any curiosity I felt, should have been content to the end of my days with the information given on the door. Mrs. Luscombe, her mother, and the children, with sometimes a nurse or two, drive about the place for many hours every day, but Luscombe and I don't trouble the carriages much. We frequent the walks and seats, and we are a good deal given to what we call fishing, which does not mean much more than talking and smoking in a boat on a calm day. I always suspected, and now I think I am sure, that but a very small portion of their worldly means was contributed by Mrs. L., although it is she who takes the greatest pains to spend the money. Luscombe's steady, sensible management of his business it was that made them rich. He was not badly off to begin as a manufacturer, and now he has grown to be wealthy.

There was one subject about which Luscombe and I talked a good deal this summer, and I fancy

it interested both, because it affected us so differently. I had come down from town this year rather gloomy at the prospect of everything—fuel, food, raiment, shelter becoming so dear as people say they will be. I should not, I confess, have thought much about the matter myself until it should have begun to press upon me, only I could not avoid listening to the complaints and forebodings of Biddulph and Hatfield and other family men, who persisted that we must all be starved unless the Government should consider our case, and raise our pay. They made such an ado that I too became alarmed; and as all my friends and colleagues sang in one key, I looked upon it as settled that evil times were at hand, thought there could be no second opinion on the point, and that all we had to do was, as the official phrase has it, to “govern ourselves accordingly.” Being a single man, I postponed attempts at self-government, but I went down to the sea pretty strong in discontent, and not unwilling to air my grievances, which I thought I might do without controversy, as they must be everybody’s grievances. But when I began to talk in that way to Luscombe, as you may be sure that I did before we had been long together, I was rather startled by his withdrawing his pipe from his mouth less languidly than usual and giving me a wink as he said—

“Prices, my dear fellow! what’s prices got to do with it? If we pay good prices we get good prices too. In at the bung-hole and out at the spigot, eh?”

This was Greek to me, and I was too puzzled to wink back at Luscombe or to share his satisfaction. I only said, as he scattered the ashes from his pipe—

“If you mean that while some few things are to be dear, many others are to be very cheap, then I

understand that on the whole one may not be much worse off than at present; but so far as I can make out, the rise is to be in everything, and one’s income will not, six months hence, suffice for more than half of what it will procure at present.”

“But if, while the expenses are doubled, the income is trebled or quadrupled, then what does it matter? Ah! I see, though, Collins, I see” (my name is Collins). “Your income, or most of it—your salary, that is—is fixed, ain’t it? and it don’t benefit a bit by the lively times; rather you’ve got larger outgoings all round.” Luscombe’s reservation about my income as distinct from salary referred to a few moderate investments which, by his help, I had made in prosperous concerns.

“I can’t see,” replied I, not choosing to desert on the first objection a case on which I had thought myself unanswerable, “how it can be for anybody’s benefit that the necessities of life should be sold at an enormous price; you might make your profits just as well while everything should be on a lower level.”

“No, there you’re wrong,” answered Luscombe; “it’s the great demand that assures me my profits, because I can go on producing at high pressure, with a certainty of selling on almost my own terms; and it’s the same demand that enables everybody to claim higher wages, and to idle great part of their time away, and to want indulgences that they haven’t been accustomed to, and so make everything dear.”

“You don’t mean to tell me, Luscombe, that the dearer everything gets, the better it must be for men in business generally?”

“That’s about it, I believe; it works in a circle; higher wages, more demand—can’t do without manufactures—pay more, get more;

high prices and plenty—that's prosperity, you know. By jingo! I like high prices, and hope they'll last."

"But there must be some classes who contribute the money which makes the prosperity in business. What is to happen when they can pay the heavy prices, or will pay them, no longer?"

"Oh, as I said, it works in a circle; we are all willing to pay—all of us that are in business. I don't see what's to stop it, unless the gold mines fail. Fixed incomes are a mistake, certainly; they ought to rise with the times."

"But," I persisted, "suppose everything was getting cheaper instead of getting dearer, and business falling off; then fixed incomes would have the best of it, wouldn't they?"

"I suppose they would," answered Luscombe; "but what's the use of talking about that? The tendency is upward, don't you see, and it's likely to be so. Business is so well understood that we're in no danger of falling upon bad times, unless we should be fools enough to go to war."

"Or to let an enemy invade us, which we seem likely enough to do, with the sort of rulers we now have," I couldn't help saying.

"Oh, bosh!" replied Luscombe; "I don't believe in invasions. We're on the right tack now, you may depend."

This was all the comfort I could get from Luscombe. He rejoiced in the prospect of high prices, and saw no end to them. The whole thing was a puzzle to me, and the more I thought about it the more bewildered I got. If we had had a famine, or a pestilence, one could have understood it; but Luscombe, who certainly seemed to know what he was talking about, said that plenty and high prices made prosperity. If there is plenty, why should prices be high? After hearing from Luscombe teaching so entirely different

from that which I had heard in London among my *confrères*, I was not surprised to find that there were more than two opinions on the present state of things. I was dining at Luscombe's that evening, and happened to bring up the subject of prices again, in reference to a letter which I received by the afternoon post from poor Hatfield.

"What do you think about the exorbitant prices that are and are to be, Mrs. Luscombe?" I said. "Your husband tells me they mean prosperity."

"Really, I don't know about prices or prosperity either," answered Mrs. Luscombe. "I know that we must have our comforts and live becomingly; and as long as we do *that* I ask no questions."

Living becomingly had been words with different meanings to the Luscombes ever since I had enjoyed their acquaintance. Six years since they went out to *ride*, as Mrs. L. called it, in a hired fly. Now she had servants with cockades on their hats, although Luscombe, whom I sifted a little on the subject, didn't even say that he had joined the volunteers. I don't say this spitefully or satirically of my friends; I only want to show how indefinite an expression "living becomingly" was. And the idea that it was indefinite must have struck me while Mrs. L. was yet speaking; because, as soon as she ended her observation by saying that she asked no questions about prices, Mrs. Belling, her mother, remarked with some warmth, and not in the most grammatical language—

"And the more shame to you, Isabella! The prices is a shame and a sin, I'm always tellin' 'ee. I'd starve before I'd encourage such prodigality. Wilful waste will bring woful want yet; mind what I say." Mrs. Belling, who was derived from North Devon, pronounced the words "to you," as if they had

been spelled each with four of the vowels "teiou yeiou," and she put a strong consonant at the end of Isabella, to give the name a finish.

"I mentioned the subject," said I, apologetically, "in consequence of a letter which I found when I went to dress. It seemed pitched in a key  totally different from Luscombe's remarks in the afternoon, that I can't understand a bit what's going on. My friend in London says that he is half wild with the thought of how to reduce his expenses in the coming winter. If meat is to be half-a-crown a-pound, and coals forty shillings a-ton, with other things in proportion, he hardly knows how his family is to be kept alive at all. The poor fellow says he cannot bestow them all in a smaller house; but he must withdraw two or three of his children from school, give up the plans he had formed for putting them out in the world, allow meat at table on only certain days, and devote all his income to maintaining a bare existence. I am quite shocked to find him so depressed."

"Fixed income again," observed Luscombe; "it's a mistake."

"Mistake is it!" answered Mrs. Belling, sharply; "encouragement of ruinous prices is a mistake, I think. Would I pay the prices they ask for meat, and for wages, and for rent, and for coals, and so on; the exorbitant wretches? Would I encourage these unconscionable demands? No, I should think not. If people won't pay the prices other people can't get 'em. Everybody ought to refuse to pay."

"I don't think you understand, ma'am," put in Luscombe. "We can't stop everything just when money is so plentiful and orders so brisk."

"Oh dear, ma, we must have everything proper and genteel," observed Mrs. Luscombe. "We can't

help it if the people charge so much for them."

"Must, Isabella—*must!*" echoed Mrs. Belling, with indignation; "I declare I've no patience. Now, look here. When me and your father, Mr. Belling, was first married, we didn't think ourselves common people, I assure 'ee. Mr. B. was on the grand jury many a time, and though we was not to call rich, we could hold up our heads with the best of 'em. Now, what I tell you is true. We used to pay fourpence-ha'penny and fi'pence a-pound, for the best joints of meat; a good servant-girl's wages was from six to nine pounds a-year; old Jane the nurse, you know, had but eight to the end of her days, and she reared you all. Two fine fowls cost eighteenpence, or two shillings, according to the season; eggs from two to three dozen for a shilling; and fish so plentiful and cheap that it was used without any limits. Cods and whittings, and soles and mullet, why, there was no end to 'em. Wood and turf always made part of our fuel; and we used 'em altogether, if coals was extravagant, as they was sometimes."

"Suppose, ma'am," ventured Luscombe, "that the wood and turf had been dear too, or that you couldn't have got them at all."

"That would be supposing what never was the case," said Mrs. Belling. "We always could get 'em; but if we couldn't, I'd have made other shift, rather than encourage extortion. I'd have let 'em see."

"Excuse me, ma'am," interposed Luscombe once more. "If the corn, or the minerals, or the potatoes had fetched a high price and been in great demand, I think you wouldn't have minded paying good wages to farm-labourers or miners. Now I can get good prices for what I produce; but, to produce it, want both labour and coal, for both of which I am content to pay dearly, as long

as what I sell is dear too, and brings me in plenty of profit."

"Quite ruinous ideas those. I wish you may never find it out, Isabella. I'd pay what was fair and proper; but beyond that not one penny should anybody squeeze out of me, I'd see."

"The law used to be of your way of thinking, ma'am, once, and tried to fix prices for everything, but it didn't answer."

"Yes, it must answer, and that is what the law ought to be a-seeing to now, instead of passing Acts (she called them *Ax*) for a parcel of thick-headed electors to vote in the dark, a thing which Mr. Belling always said would be the ruin of the country. But come, Isabella, if you are going to take those children into the fields this evening 'tis time we were going. I'd let 'em see that they should take fair prices or get none."

And the ladies went off to their walk, while Luscombe and I thought we would have some back-gammon. The conversation aroused in me serious thoughts, which I never had before, and I was thinking more or less about these strange money matters all the while we were playing. Luscombe seemed to understand the condition of things best; but then, could there be no comfort at all for poor people who have fixed annuities? that seemed very hard. And wasn't there some reason in Mrs. Belling's idea that the law ought to interfere and keep prices at a fair level? Because, if all works in a circle, as Luscombe says, we may as well have a circle of moderate prices as of intolerable ones.

"Well, that's a let off! why the deuce didn't you take me up then? you might," exclaimed Luscombe.

"By Jove! yes. I didn't see it. I keep puzzling over this problem about the prices, and don't attend."

"Then the prices have caused you

to be inevitably gammoned, my boy: salt won't save you now. It is ordained that I win this."

"I don't see that," I answered, and the game was never won nor lost; for while Luscombe was throwing with a loud chuckle, there gleamed through the room a flash of lightning that wellnigh blinded us both, and before either of us had time to say, "What the devil was that?" a splitting peal of thunder, so sharp that it seemed to go through our heads, rattled through and shook the apartment. So closely did the crash follow the light that we must have been in the cloud. Didn't it startle us, that's all! We jumped from our seats and looked out. It had evidently been raining for some time, and now torrents were pouring down. "Where can those unhappy creatures be?" fussed Luscombe; "they were going into the fields, as bad luck would have it. I don't suppose they took note of the sky, or made for shelter, so this would come upon them on the open hillside. I must send out," and he rung the bell.

"Look here," I said, "when you've sent out any servants you can get hold of, you and I'll start in different directions. Some of us must meet with them. You despatch the men while I fetch my waterproofs."

And I ran to my own apartments and got out my wraps as quickly as possible; but running down-stairs heedlessly and in the gloom of the storm, I came against the edge of Dr. Manassé's baize door, which was ajar, and struck my face and hand and foot, tripping myself clumsily, and pitching on to my shoulder in the passage. There was no time to examine damages; I jumped up and was off again in a minute, satisfied that at any rate no bone was broken. As I ran back to Luscombe the cloud had made it as dark as night,

and I was galled by hailstones as big as gooseberries, which pelted viciously, and rolled and slid along the pavement after they fell, and gathered into great white heaps in corners and gutters. Luscombe and I loaded ourselves with umbrellas and set out on our several ways, both terrified lest the wanderers large and small should be exposed in the open field to this pitiless torrent. The lightning was momentarily blinding as I sped along, and yet before each flash was over I saw the ground for yards as if it had been all fountains, the heavy streams and hailstones striking sharply on the gravel and flags, and then rebounding and dancing in all directions. It was desperate work to get along at all, and it seemed that I was an unreasonably long time in reaching the end of the pavement whence I was to turn into the fields. Before leaving the line of houses I looked round to listen, hoping that some sound of wheels or of voices might reach me, indicating that our party had been found. An awful flash at that minute lighted up the whole terrace, and I saw a vehicle of some sort at a door, which I felt sure must be Luscombe's, and some children being lifted out. So persuaded was I of these being our friends, that I risked the loss of a few minutes in retracing my steps, and rejoiced afterwards that I had done so, for they had come back not even wet, and Luscombe had met them. Fortunately shelter had been near, and a boy at hand to send for a carriage. So in five minutes we were all again in our usual places, making remarks on the unexampled severity of the storm, and wondering what would have happened if a farmhouse had not been near—except Mrs. Luscombe, who was always greatly terrified by thunder, and who was laid on a sofa in great tremor, and only half alive.

"You must let her quiet for a bit till the storm abates," said Mrs. Belling. "She's always in this pecky way when there's lightning. It's from her father's side she gets it. Mr. Belling was not over-strong."

"I've known many ladies," said I, "who were distressingly affected by storms. Old Mrs. Biddulph, of whom you have heard me speak, would be down in the cellar half dead during such a storm as this, and ill for a week after. It is fortunate for you, Mrs. Belling, that the electricity doesn't affect you."

"Me!" answered Mrs. B.; "I had seven children to rear, and I reared 'em, which I should hardly have done if I'd put myself into tantrums about a clap of thunder, and Mr. Belling apt to give way sometimes. Isabella will come round after a little quiet."

Luscombe accepted the assurances of his mother-in-law, but I could see that he was anxious. As for the sufferer herself, she seemed hardly conscious, and the only evidence she gave of vitality was desiring by signs or whispers that the warm woollen shawl in which her mother had wrapped her should be exchanged for an India one, to the great indignation of her parent, who exclaimed, "Well, I never! It's bad enough to waste money in such things, but to lie about upon couches in 'em when you're not altogether well, and a warm wrap is a comfort, is wickedness and nothing else. I never taught her such ways, and I don't know how she took to 'em!" Mrs. Luscombe lay very quiet for some time after this, and, thinking she had dropped asleep, we made but little noise, and for the first time I was able to think of my scratched hand and my bruised face, and to work about my sore shoulder and speculate as to whether it would be quite stiff to-morrow. But when the lights came in we saw plainly that Mrs. Luscombe, though unconscious, was not asleep,

and we were all once more in action applying restoratives, but she didn't come to herself.

"Send for the doctor, my good fellow," I said to Luscombe.

"That confounded Mrs. Virag lives a deuce of a way off," he answered, "and I don't know how anybody can get to her through the rain. Hadn't we better send for somebody else? Do you know of any one nearer?"

It had been the pleasure of Mrs. Luscombe to be attended by a female practitioner, Mrs. Antipatica Virag, much to Luscombe's annoyance, and not at all to her own benefit as I fancy. His question as to my knowing of any other doctor was very *apropos* of my scratches and bruises, which I had just been contemplating.

"Know of any one nearer?" said I, repeating his words. "Yes, that I do, and to my cost. There's a doctor in my house; he was at home since the storm began, for I saw his door ajar when I went for my wraps, and I shouldn't think he had gone out since. Shall I fetch him?"

Luscombe nodded assent, and in three minutes I was at Dr. Manassé's door, where the doctor himself was standing with his hat in his hand and his cloak on as if going out. He did not wait for me to tell my errand, but addressed me at once in a rather foreign accent.

"Aha! you come at last. I wait for you. Let us proceed."

"Pardon me, you mistake. I have not had the pleasure of knowing you before; but now——"

"No, there is not mistake," answered the doctor; "we have long been *en rapport*, you and I. I wait for you. I am ready. Let us go quickly." And he walked towards the doorway, from which, without my directing him, he went straight to Luscombe's house, and up to the drawing-room. "Ah!

it is nothing," he said, as he regarded Mrs. Luscombe; "syncope from the fright, that is all!"

"Syncope from fright!" echoed Mrs. Belling; "don't tell me. I've tried her with burnt feathers, and sal-volatile, and rubbed her wrists, and sprinkled her with cold water, without being able to bring her to."

"You shall see," said the doctor; and, taking one of Mrs. L.'s hands, he looked at her intently. He then made one or two gentle upward passes and the lady opened her eyes. "There it is," he proceeded, "it will be well now." And it was well; the storm cleared away and Mrs. Luscombe got rapidly better and was much chidden by her parent. Luscombe, the doctor, and I went down to have some refreshment after all this. Manassé was a pleasant, intelligent-looking man, with a high forehead, but there was something strange about him which caused me to feel an uncomfortable thrill sometimes when he spoke. I felt the same when he addressed me at his door. Sometimes he looked older and sometimes younger. It was a puzzling visage. Our first conversation was naturally about thunder and its effects; and the doctor, who, it seemed, had been in every country in the world, entertained us with interesting electrical anecdotes of much interest. I was longing to inquire how he had guessed my errand to him that evening, but did not readily find an opportunity, the conversation flowed so fast. At last the doctor, having taken us three "in lightning, thunder, and in rain" over the atlas, began to describe very minutely some effects which occurred when the first Napoleon with his army was in Venice early in the revolutionary days.

"How you must have read it all up," said Luscombe, "to be able to tell such particulars at this distance

of time! Access to military and philosophical papers, I suppose."

"No, no, I don't read never, nor I don't write," answered the doctor. "There is not time," he continued, with impressive softness. "No, I learn from those souls with whom I am *en rapport*." Another thrill went through me as, looking towards me, he said, "You feel, sir, that our souls are related. I learn from you all what you know." What could the fellow mean?

"If you've got correspondents out of the flesh," I said, trying to wink at Luscombe, though I didn't feel at all at my ease, "I suppose there's no limit as to time in your information. You could tell us, probably, of things very ancient indeed—say—say—(I'm not very well up in ancient history)—say the Trojan war, you know."

Manassé looked keenly at me, and this time it was a twinge rather than a thrill which I felt. "The Trojan war, no. I am *en rapport* with no one there. I have found no soul able to explain it. I doubt if it has been. But the wars of Joshua, yes; Semiramis, yes; Hannibal, yes. I can tell you of the famine in King Ahab's reign."

"That must have been a terrible time," I said, "when subsistence could hardly be procured at all; but it seems we are going now to have famine prices without any scarcity. I wish you could tell us what that means, for it puzzles me beyond patience."

"Yes, I'll tell you; the world has got suddenly too rich," answered the doctor. Luscombe laughed. He thought his turn was come now. The doctor had laid down the law about thunder and antiquities, but this was a business matter, and my friend gave us his ideas about prices over again at some length.

"Ah, yes; it work in a circle, that is true," answered Manassé, calmly. "It will go on perhaps for

long time; but somebodies must find the money to make all rich, and some time or other somebodies will refuse. The world is large; somebodies what pay are in Persia and Peru and at the Cape of Good Hope. It will take long for their wills to come here, but they will come."

"And what then?" asked Luscombe.

"Then the orders will become small, and profits will not be, and trade will have a shock. It is well to prepare. Your friend, who is *en rapport* with me, understand."

"I wish to heaven I did!" I answered; "but I don't."

"Well, it is late," said the doctor. "I say adieu; I go. Let us walk to our hotel, and I shall endeavour to make clear."

It was indeed late, and we both took leave and walked to our very near apartments. "Come, I will show you of the great prices," said Manassé, as he opened my old enemy the baize door, and bowed me into his apartments, which were not dark, but dim, with a rich mellow light, which became fuller as one looked around, so as to make every object distinct. It was a most voluptuous room that we were in, the furniture, the ornaments—sculptures, pictures, casts, arms, rich fabrics of many nations, coins, costumes—being remarkable, and, I doubt not, of the rarest kind. Beautiful flowers stood in vases, and their perfume mingled with, or rather was perceived by turns with, a fine aromatic scent, which every now and then floated across one. It was a bewildering, bewitching sort of a place; and after looking round it a minute while we laid down our hats and cloaks, and after receiving, as imaginative people say, the influence of the scene, I was hardly surprised to hear the doctor clap his hands, and then to see enter an elderly man in Eastern costume, and with a long beard, to

whom my host spoke in a foreign tongue. "Sheik Omar," said he, "will remove our hats and coats and prepare pipes." The Oriental then carried out our damp things, and, re-entering, offered me several mouthpieces to choose from. I, understanding his meaning, selected a beautiful specimen, richly inlaid and sparkling with gems, which Sheik Omar, as the fellow appeared to be called, adapted to a pipe which ended in a tube that passed down into the floor. This, when adjusted, he placed on a gilded rest, close to a most tempting-looking couch. He then performed a similar service for his master, and silently withdrew. The doctor motioned me to recline on the couch, which I was not loath to do, and throwing himself on another, commenced sucking at his pipe, whereupon I tried mine; and I am bound to say, whatever may be my general opinion of Dr. Manassé, that he gave me the most exquisite pipe that ever I tasted.

"Odd," said I, "that I have never seen your servant about, living so close to you as I do."

"Pardon," answered Manassé; "Sheik Omar is a free Bedouin, who would scorn to serve even a monarch. He accompanies me, he does not serve; we are *en rapport*; we are of the same soul. The Sheik walks not the promenade in the dress of his tribe; he condescends to European costume." And all at once I remembered a fellow in a fez and French-cut clothes passing about the esplanade, and identified him with the Sheik.

"Yes, I will show you of the prices," continued the doctor; "and I shall show also the public, for I shall print my thoughts."

"You appear to forget," I answered, "that you never read or write." I thought I had him there, but he knew how to wriggle out of the difficulty.

"No, I forget not. I shall not write myself, but I shall publish through some other soul with which I am *en rapport*." The man must have thought me an absolute muff. I let him go on, however, and the next thing he said was—

"Sheik Omar composes the refreshing coffee for you. While it is not ready I explain that the smoke, which you see not, rises in the chamber within. It has the rich bouquet, but I receive it not here, lest, when it is old, the saloon should smell badly. Let us walk into the chamber of smoke."

Now I was feeling excessively comfortable and not in the least inclined to move, and was rousing myself to make an objection to this adjournment, when I felt the same disagreeable thrill that I had felt several times before that evening, and, I don't know why, rose and advanced to the high glass door which the doctor held open. The chamber within seemed as strange and grand as the other, but more gay and brilliant. Manassé bowed and waved his hand for me to enter first, which I did. Immediately I was conscious of a languor not wholly agreeable, and turned about to retrace my steps.

CHAPTER II.

It was a frosty morning in December. I dressed hastily in my London chamber, for I had lain rather later than was right, seeing that I had to catch the train for the

north at nine. Luscombe had asked me to go down and spend Christmas with them at Wester Mills in the North Riding. He was not going to hunt this season,

he said, and visiting was almost suspended on account of the busy times and the unprecedented cost of living; so, if I would run down and enliven them a little (so the good fellow put it) it would be conferring a real favour. So I was going; and to say truth, I was not altogether sorry to get away from my poor friends in town, whose troubles and complaints were sadly distressing. It was an abominable nuisance, though, that there were but two quick trains a-day, one in the morning and the other in the evening, because the old eleven o'clock train would have allowed me to breakfast comfortably at my club, and get to King's Cross without an effort; whereas, here I was now dressing in a hurry, and sipping a cup of coffee and munching a roll as I did so, very doubtful whether I should save five minutes to get a trifle more in the way of breakfast at the station refreshment-room. I was ready at last; my portmanteau strapped and taken out to the cab at twenty-five before nine. I knew I could get to King's Cross in from twenty to twenty-five minutes, according to the speed of the cab. "Drive like smoke," I said to the cabby; "I want some refreshment before I start." Last year, if I had spoken this way, cabby would certainly have winked and said, "Ay, ay, sir;" but now he said nothing of the kind, but gave a sort of derisive grunt and echoed me with bitterness. "Yes, like smoke," said he, gloomily, as he mounted behind. The poor devil of a horse set off slipping along over the frosty ground. How one longed for the old days when smith's work was cheap and easily procurable! *then* cabbies would have had their horses rough-shod on such a morning as this. However, my driver was very careful, as, no doubt he had need to be, and he held the

poor beast up till he got on to some better pavement and more level ground. The light was just breaking as we rattled along. Instead of the drowsy appearance one had been accustomed to in the streets if one happened to be abroad at that hour on a winter's morning, there were at all the corners and near the public-houses crowds of people of both sexes, some of them respectably dressed, who did not look at all as if they were early risers, but rather as if they had not been in bed. At first I did not give much heed to these groups; but, as they seemed to be collected all along my route, I at last stood up and questioned the cabby without stopping him. "Who air they?" said he, still severe and biting; "why, they're the singers, and musicians, and showmen, and sweller kind o' mountebanks, and play-hactors, wot can't make a livin' no-how in these here times, and air a flocking together in their distress, poor creatures, as hothers may 'ave to do afore long."

"Do you mean that amusements are altogether neglected," I asked, "on account of the extravagant prices?"

"I mean that wot you call 'spectable amusements is wellnigh hex-tinct. Music-halls, casinos, gin-palaces, and dancing-saloons is the honly fashionable places now where the people goes as gets the rattlin' high wages. Hartisans' work is the thing, I believe."

This pointed to a new division of the world's goods with a vengeance. One class of men who laboured for their bread unable to get employment and apparently starving, while another class had got idle and luxurious. However, I had not much time to think over it now, for we were approaching the King's Cross station. Along the last quarter of a mile were lounging men in corduroy suits, whom I supposed to be

some of the porters who were discharged when the number of the trains was reduced, looking about for any chance vacancy. Some of them were eating their breakfasts as they leaned against the walls—thick lumps of dry bread, which they divided with their pocket-knives. They looked half-famished, poor creatures; and I was glad when I had passed them and was within the gates of the station. My watch, I found, was a little faster than the railway time, so that I had a minute or two to spare; and handing the cabby his six shillings (what a fare for $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles!), I went to the bar and got two sandwiches and a glass of ale, for which I paid one-and-sixpence. The fare through to the Wester Mills station, which used to be forty-two shillings or thereabouts, is, of course, now that these enormous fares are charged, not covered by a five-pound note. How I wished that all this machinery had not been set going at the beginning of the year, that the miners hadn't struck, and that the railway servants, who were so distressed now, had not made such fools of themselves!

In the compartment with me was only one gentleman, who brought in a bagful of business letters, and was occupied in reading them. We were sitting at opposite ends of the carriage at first; but when I asked, in the old fashion, for a foot-warmer, and was told that the company was now obliged to charge two shillings for the use of it, my companion proposed that we should sit *vis-à-vis*, and have one between us. I thought I would have out my sleep while he continued reading, but I couldn't doze off, not a bit. I began thinking of the miserable Christmas that poor Hatfield and Biddulph were like to have. Both of them were reduced to one servant-of-all-work; they were really pinched for food; and though it was beginning to be

the fashion to be shabby on account of the ruinous price of clothes, yet those poor friends of mine were worse than shabby; they had not sufficient covering to keep out the severe cold. The Government, who, back in the summer, were thought not unlikely to increase our pay, now told us that they were besieged by applications for employment, and that if our work and remuneration were not to our liking, we had better leave them; but that meant going to the workhouse for some of us.

When my companion had got through his letters and just glanced over his newspaper he looked at me over his spectacles and said, "Great meeting, I see, at Hull yesterday, to find work for the unemployed sailors. £4000 subscribed on the spot, and more promised. I'm afraid, though, it will amount to nothing more than keeping them from starving by charity. Jack can turn his hand to nothing on shore that we want at present." I had heard something about distress among the sailors, but had no suspicion of the widespread suffering which he described. The impossibility of getting coal in any quantity, he said, and the enormous price of what could be procured, had almost stopped the running of steam-ships. There were not sailing-vessels to do the work, so the ships were at anchor or in dock, and the poor mariners in this hard winter, and with provisions at famine prices, unable to earn the value of a meal. The unions were buying up maize and all the cheapest and coarsest provisions. Meat was altogether banished from the workhouses, and it was a question whether they would be able long to procure salt-fish. I gave utterance to my thought about the strangeness of one portion of the community obtaining gains or wages of unheard-of amount, while

another portion was starving; and my *vis-à-vis* admitted that the state of things was indeed without precedent, and that it could not have existed but for the suddenness of the prosperity to which the great demands, the strikes, and the high prices were owing. "If it had come at all gradually," he continued, "things would have adjusted themselves as it proceeded; but coming, as it did, with a rush, we have these curious exaltations and depressions. Things will undoubtedly settle down at last, but in the mean time we have first these remarkable inequalities, and then, I fear, we must expect a general decline, accompanied probably by much suffering among those who have no saving to draw on."

"But I don't see the connection," I put in. "I understand what you say about the sailors, but I know that many branches of industry are prospering inordinately, for I have friends engaged in them. Why should the seamen's hard times affect other trades?"

"Why, you see, in the first place, the immense amount of pauperism must be a heavy drain upon all who pay rates; but, independently of that, if there be a dearth of ships, freights cannot be carried abroad, and manufactured goods must soon lose their market. Take the coal-masters and coal-miners, who are having the best of times for the moment; the laying-up of ships not only stops exportation, but it stops the demand for ships' fuel. Also, the impoverished classes who cannot buy coal or anything else cause a sensible deduction from the body of consumers. If our interests were confined to the four seas, or to Europe even, these causes would operate unmistakably at once; but our trade extends over the whole globe; the wires have to work round through Chicago, Peking,

Chili, New Zealand, and I know not where, before the forces react upon those who stand on the vantage-ground—that is, those who produce the most indispensable commodities. But they will be reached in time. A little while, and, notwithstanding the present short supply, the demand for coal must fall off. Then what will be the use of a strike when a third of the hands now employed will get out as much as is required? The coal-miners will not then be much better off than the sailors are now."

I began now to have a little idea of this mystery about prices, and would have been glad to have pursued the conversation, but my companion changed carriages to go along the loop-line to Hull, and I was left to my own thoughts for the rest of the cold dull journey: so I laid out fourpence in what would have been a penny paper last year. The night had fallen before I reached Wester Mills, but there was that good fellow Luscombe in his fur coat on the platform, and I could see the dog-cart relieved against the white railings which were opposite the lamp. The sight of his friendly face and his hearty welcome restored my spirits at once.

"Thought at first you weren't in the train," he said; "those few and dull oil lamps are but a miserable substitute for the gas, and I couldn't see you. We shall have learnt to appreciate the gas-light if ever we get it again."

Ten minutes' drive brought us to the gates, and three minutes more to the door, where I was rather surprised not to see Brown the butler in attendance. "I pity you, Mr. Brown," I said, mentally, "if Mrs. L. should hear that I made my way in without your august assistance." However, I ought not to laugh at Mrs. Luscombe, for she welcomed me very kindly, and said she pro-

bably should not have been there to receive me if I had not fetched Dr. Manassé to her in the thunderstorm last summer. Mrs. Belling, too, who, I fancy, rather likes me, although she snaps me up sometimes, was also most cordial; and as for the children, though they guessed no doubt that they would hear of something to their advantage as soon as the recesses of my portmanteau should be explored, it was very pleasant to have them, just for a little, you know, climbing about me, narrating all their little wonders and producing their treasures. Minnie, the eldest girl, had got an ermine muff and ermine-topped boots, at which, when she brought them into the drawing-room, I saw her grandmother cast a fearful scowl; and little Harry had just been promoted to a rocking-horse which he forced me off to see, deaf equally to the faint objections of his mother and to Mrs. Belling's more vehement commands. It was very jolly to an old sinner who lives for the most part a solitary life, to stand there on the hearth-rug in that pleasant room among friends who rejoiced to see him, and whom he was glad to see!

"Now, then, Collins, old fellow, 'tis time to dress," said Luscombe, after our little bit of preliminary gossip was over. "You'll not object to your dinner after the journey, and you will brighten up our party, I can tell you. You're to have the blue room, same as last time, and I hope you and I will see 1873 started on its course before we part again."

Well, I did enjoy my dinner, that's a fact: but the enjoyment was not absolutely unalloyed. The great Brown did not supervise the meal, and I was fidgeting to account for his absence, while feeling instinctively that it would be better not to allude to it. It was an excellent, indeed a very handsome,

meal, and the more to my liking that there was less ostentatious profusion than I had been accustomed to observe at that board. I asked Mrs. Belling to take wine in the old fashion; she liked it—the old hobnobbing fashion, I mean—and for that matter she liked a glass of champagne too. And then we had a bowing scene all round, and they said how glad they all were to see me there; and by-and-by the children came in, and I gave them unlawful indulgences, and their very grandmother connived and was *particeps criminis*, and had for ever to hold her peace as far as that transgression was concerned. Then Luscombe and I were alone. We drew to the fire, and were soon on some of our old subjects. I could not help congratulating him on the comfort and prosperity which I found him enjoying, while, alas! other valued friends whom I had left behind were enduring not only the privations of the moment, but the miserable apprehensions of the dark future. And I asked whether, with the tremendous prices which were demanded for all the necessities of life, he still found himself more than reimbursed by the high profits of his business. He answered generally in the affirmative, but not with a wink and joyous "I believe you, my boy," as he did in the summer: and presently he went on to explain. Orders, he said, continued to come in, notwithstanding the high prices he was obliged to charge—not quite so plentifully as they came in the summer, perhaps, but still quite satisfactorily, if only the present state of things should last. "But I must tell you, Collins, in confidence, that there's something I don't quite like in the look of things. Business is good in its present condition, but I don't think I could raise prices further without materially reducing orders; on the

other hand I am apprehensive of an immediate demand for higher wages, to which I shall probably have to yield."

"But you used to say it worked in a circle—higher wages, higher profits; in at the bung-hole, out at the spigot, and so on."

"Well, yes; but we've got the circle up higher than I ever thought to see it; and though the hands will no doubt keep demanding more wages, I don't think my prices will bear to be any higher."

"Isn't that what Dr. Manassé in the summer told us would happen? He said, if you remember, that it would require time to make the high prices diminish orders, but that orders certainly would decrease after prices should have been high for a little time."

"It's just this way," answered Luscombe: "the hands are spoiled by having things just as they please. They are idle, extravagant, and self-indulgent. The more they get the more they want. I know there will be another demand soon, to pay for the music and dancing, and eating and drinking, that are going on among them this Christmas; and I have determined to meet this demand, if possible, by contracting my own indulgences a little for a while."

I saw that I was on the verge of the great Brown mystery, which had been exercising me so severely. "No doubt, then, that explains," I said, "the absence of —?"

Luscombe held up his hands deprecatingly. "I'll tell you," he interrupted, "my idea of how to manage. It will be a great matter if the orders already received can be completed without interruption: future orders we may perhaps receive with proviso referring to the uncertain condition of the labour market. So, in order that I may make some concession to the hands

when necessary without raising my prices, I have reduced expenditure a little. You know I used to lay down a little wine every year; I have not bought a bottle this year. My hunting for this season you know that I have given up, and sold three horses—old Centurion among them, over whose loss I grieve more than anything. However, it is well that I came to my decision when I did, for I sold well, which it would be impossible to do now that so many are following my example, and forage is so dear."

"And Brown?" said I; "I have been longing to ask about Brown."

"Well, Brown cost me a world of unhappiness," answered Luscombe. "My wife thought the butler indispensable to our appearance, and it was hard to persuade her that a sacrifice of this kind must be made. She sees it now; but I'm glad you made no remark, for maybe she's a little sore yet. Thank you, Collins. Well, you see, in order to reduce the household, it was necessary to begin at the top, and a very material saving, I assure you——"

"Yes, of course," I interrupted; "wages just now——"

"Nonsense! my dear fellow; wages make the smallest part of it. It isn't wages; it's food that makes servants so expensive now. So many of them are being turned adrift every day, that they don't stand much for wages if they can but get housed and fed."

"And yet," I said, "'tis not so long ago since we were remarking on how they all detested domestic service, and were endeavouring to get away from it into shops or factories or anywhere, where labour could be confined to certain hours of the day, and they might receive their whole remuneration in money."

"Aha!" chuckled Luscombe "their notes are altered now. Any-

body that will keep them may have their services. Domestic servants are at any rate feeling that the times are hard. And, by the by, one or two mill-owners that I know, and who, like myself, are willing to make some sacrifice to get quietly through this awkward time, have started tables for their people, giving food instead of additional pay. I daresay it will prove a good plan, and that the smell of a good dinner will mediate effectually between labour and capital. I haven't premises suited for trial of the experiment."

I told Luscombe what I had heard about the sailors, musicians, and so on. Now, by his account, domestic servants would soon be as badly off as the sailors. Still I couldn't understand the situation nor Luscombe's tactics. "Look here," I said; "you can't go on raising your labourers' wages if you mustn't increase your own profits."

"No, I can't, of course; and that's what I'm looking to (this is confidential, mind, old fellow). You see, once the orders decrease—and they're falling off already—I may cease to work part of my establishment. Others, no doubt, may do the same."

"That's what you call half-time, or something of the sort?"

"Half-time, not a bit of it; half-time might be better for the hands, as not absolutely throwing any out of work; but it would be ruin to employers, as keeping them still exposed to strikes and interruptions. No, no; between ourselves, what you saw among the railway porters is likely to be repeated in the mills. Many hands will be discharged before this winter is over. Shortly after that happens, and they see that there really is not work to do for all, employers will get the upper hand again."

"Good God!" I said, "what are these unhappy people to do?"

"That's the serious question," answered Luscombe. "You see, they've mainly contributed to the state of things. I don't mean by asking for a fair share of the profits that were going—that was all fair; but by idling, intemperance, lavishing their wages on low amusements, and by utter recklessness and extravagance."

"This," said I, "is a serious look-out that throws into the shade all my little tremors about the prices of living. But you have not told me what has become of Brown?"

"Brown, I am sorry to say, managed to keep his ground here, after I felt certain that he would have to go. The consequence is, that when at last he did go, so many other people were discharging their butlers that he has not yet got employment. When I first spoke to him I could have got him a place with a nobleman; but that was filled up before he left."

It seemed to me that it was adversity, and not prosperity, that was working in a circle, and that the circle would soon be complete.

The drawing-room was as cheerful as it had been before dinner, and the ladies were disposed to converse. Outside it was freezing bitterly, but here was comfort and enjoyment. I saw that some thought was amusing Luscombe. Out it came at last.

"Well, the season's taking care that I shall have little to regret in selling my horses. The weather seems as if there could be no hunting for weeks. If it had been an open winter I might have pined."

"Yes, yes," observed Mrs. Luscombe; "I liked you to belong to the hunt; that was proper and becoming, you know; but" (turning to me) "I was never easy when he

was out. He's no great rider, isn't Luscombe, and I was always trembling for fear he should be brought in with bones broken."

"Fear or no fear, 'tis a mercy to have got rid of hunters and—and—other extravagances. That will always bring its own reward," said Mrs. Belling.

"Anyhow we don't seem unhappy, do we?" said Luscombe. "Let's have a game of cards. Mrs. Belling, ma'am, you and I will try our luck against Mr. Collins and Isabella, shall we?"

"Sixpences and no bets. I never bet," said Mrs. Belling, who liked a rubber. And the evening was gone all too rapidly, though all the same I was ready for bed after my long journey. "My mother-in-law," said Luscombe, as we were parting for the night, "doesn't like the sight of expensive things, and likes just the idea of getting rid of them. She knows very well that our house-keeping, reduced as it is, costs more than it did a year ago. But then the visible signs of luxurious living are gone."

It was very interesting, and sometimes very sad, to observe the state of things in the neighbourhood of Wester Mills. I, during my visit, went about and informed myself a good deal, sometimes with Luscombe and sometimes alone. Distress, where it did afflict, was of course very severe in this inclement weather; but except among the railway people and the servants out of place, there was not much distress visible in the north. Shopkeepers, though charging so highly for everything, said that their business was scarcely remunerative, and that they would have preferred a lower scale of prices all round. But as for the artisans and factory hands, they seemed to be fortune's favourites at this epoch. They lived upon the best of everything, laboured at the

most only four short days a-week, crowded the public-houses, shouted and fought in the streets, frequented music-halls and low theatres, and were constantly making short railway excursions to pay visits or vary their amusements. They seemed to have discovered the art of thriving, and to have no idea that things could ever change except for the better. Meantime a general gloomy feeling seemed to pervade the more thoughtful classes. The quarter's revenue, as compared with the corresponding quarter of 1871, showed a great falling off. Excise and customs gave a sorry yield, and even the returns of the post-office and telegraphs were disappointing. On the other hand the poor-rates were higher than had been known for a generation. Agitators started up to take advantage of the public uneasiness, and to lay the blame of it on our institutions; mad theorists propounded the wildest schemes as sure remedies for all the evils; there was much political excitement. Very little visiting or entertaining took place among the employers, who seemed quite to understand that these were not times in which it would be pardonable to encourage a large consumption of provisions.

When my visit drew near its end—that is, a day or two after we had celebrated the arrival of the new year with much quiet satisfaction—Luscombe told me that there was an appreciable diminution in the orders for goods, and that he thought things were now on the turn. "Only let me complete my contracts," said he, "and I think I am prepared for what may happen after that." He had to raise his wages again, poor fellow, as he expected; but he managed the matter very well: there was no quarrelling, neither was the work stopped for an hour, only Luscombe showed the hands that what he conceded he

had to take from his own profits, and that it would be impossible for him to raise the prices of goods any higher. Others were less fortunate than he. They stood out against the men's demands. Some encountered strikes; others, attempting to "take the bull by the horns," as they said, locked out: but the end was the same in all cases; the masters had to give in. Only where there had been disputing ill-blood was engendered which led afterwards to unhappy results, and the interruption to work caused in some cases inability to fulfil contracts as regarded time, and consequent losses both of money and connections.

A day or two before I left, I drove into Funneltown with my friend and host, who was to attend a meeting of master-manufacturers, at the United Trades' Hall. As we were early he took me in to see the building, of which the town was proud, and justly so. It was, however, with a melancholy feeling that I read the motto emblazoned over the middle of the platform in the room appropriated to public meetings, *Minerals, Mechanism, and Steam*, while I thought of the present prospects of all who put their trust in any of them. I strolled about to make what observations I might while the meeting was in progress. It certainly would have required a penetrating eye to detect symptoms of anything but general prosperity for the present. Idleness was only too apparent, but it was idleness upon full pockets; the people holiday-making, trooping into and out of public-houses, carrying along purchases of cakes, rich cheese, poultry, gingerbread, and other things which form the luxuries of their class; and flocking to exhibitions of giants, dwarfs, fat ladies, and waxwork, of which there was at least one in every street. A few miserable creatures were to be seen here and there,

of course, but not more of them than usually rend one's heart in a hard winter. One of these unfortunates I must, however, particularly mention—a man with a broken-down appearance, but struggling evidently to maintain an imposing air, spite of seedy habiliments and short commons. I was looking, not without interest, at this figure as it passed, when suddenly it turned, raised its hand to its hat-brim and addressed me by name. Judge of my surprise when I recognised the deposed Brown! I really was shocked; his hollow, yellow cheeks, and his loose waistcoat, together told a tale of much suffering; and his old pompous manner, which he had donned for a minute on seeing me, speedily gave way to the subdued mien of need and care.

"Never thought I could have wanted a place, sir," he said; "world seems to ha' turned right upside down. What any man can do as an upper servant, don't care who he is, I can do it; and here I am seven weeks out of place, and chances getting worse instead o' better."

Of course I said what I could to comfort him, was sure that these bad times couldn't last, and that even if they did, some establishment must be found before long that would be delighted to secure his services. But this instead of comforting broke him down. His eyes filled and his voice quavered as he revealed the bitterness of his disappointment.

"Nay, sir, I can see nought to hope upon, and I daren't look afore me. I've been ill, and have got weak as well as poor. Any man in steady work seems now to me an object of envy. Even those poor degraded beings as I used to think 'em, the soldiers, get their meal reg'lar, cost what it may, and needn't fret about prices. If I was a younger

man, I could find it in my heart to enlist."

I need not say that I contributed what little was in my power to keep the wolf a little longer from the door of my friend Brown; but to meet him thus, really in want, amid the waste and indulgence that were going on in every quarter of the town, was very depressing. Indeed we were all getting now a good deal more down in the mouth—how could we help it?—than at the commencement of my visit. Mrs. Belling perhaps was an exception. She may not have considered what all this was pointing to, and may have only felt a gratification natural to her at witnessing these judgments upon pomps and vanities, which had cost sums of money that she shuddered to think of. Altogether I was almost glad when my holiday expired. "I don't know but what fixed incomes may have the best of it yet," said Luscombe, as he shook my hand on the platform; "I only wish that at this moment I had a few thousands safe in the Three per cents, and no liabilities; however, things may come eventually, the burden is heavy just now."

As I neared London I began to reflect that I was only exchanging

one gloomy atmosphere for another. The troubles of my friends here would not be pleasanter to witness and to share than those which I had left with my friends in the north. I was agreeably disappointed, however, to find that, on the whole, things had not got much worse since I left town. Provisions were dear enough still; but manufactured articles were cheaper, and there were signs of relief if not actual relief. "Any number of servants I could get now if I wanted them," said Hatfield, with one of his old grins; "and even hunters and race-horses are now within my means, so I mustn't complain. Talking of horses, they say, you know, that the greater part of the beef—but I doubt not that's a fable. At any rate, when we see the lots of secretaries and clerks and office-keepers that are cut adrift every day through the shutting up of the numerous grand companies whose prospectuses used to torment us so a year ago, I think we must be thankful that our work, if not very remunerative, is at least steady and certain. I feel in better heart than I did, and can hope a little." Well said, Hatfield: it did me good to hear you!

CHAPTER III.

We got through the winter with less discomfort than we had expected. Even the coal did not become so ruinously dear as had been feared. And here we were looking forward to summer again, for it was April. I was once more leaving home, and at an unusual time of the year; for Luscombe had written to say that he had thought it prudent to send Mrs. L. and her mother and the children down to North Devon, where there was more quiet than at Wester Mills, and that he was very

lonely and depressed, and desired my company. Leave of absence was not easy to get so soon again, but I did get it and was off.

"Although there are only our two selves," said Luscombe, as we drove to the house, "you needn't fear being left too much to yourself."

"As how?" I asked.

"Well," he replied, "I'm a man of leisure now, or the next thing to it. We've little or nothing doing at the mill."

"And the people?"

"Are out of work, greatly frightened, and beginning to feel the pinch of poverty; hardly one of them has put by a penny out of the large earnings."

It was even so. Orders had almost ceased to come in. The work doing was a mere trifle. My friend had duly completed all the contracts which he had on hand when I left him at the beginning of the year, and as he had for some months foreseen the cessation of work, he had not supplied himself with much raw material, and so owed for nothing. He was losing time, but he had no fine to pay for a broken contract; while some of his neighbours, besides their forfeits, were indebted for material which lay unutilised in their stores.

The domestic establishment was now reduced to a very slender staff indeed; but Luscombe and I were very snug. We didn't inhabit the large rooms at all, and we smoked without restriction, and, so far as the present was concerned, were very jolly. But of course Luscombe, placid fellow as he is, could not shake off a heavy weight of care.

"Ain't it odd," he said, as we sat together on the evening of my arrival; "we know what a lot of wealth there is in the country, because it couldn't find an outlet nine months ago, and now here we are, capitalists and laborers, all alike suffering through the perversity and idleness of these wretched hands."

"But now that their folly has been brought home to them so sharply, they will surely be glad to resume the work which will bring them their bread."

"They couldn't if they would; their stupid proceedings during the past twelve months have effectually crushed out the demand. Orders which have to come from the ends

of the earth can't be revived in a moment just when the people in the North Riding begin to be reasonable. Besides, they ain't reasonable yet. The greater part believe still that the stoppage is but a device of the employers, and that they have only to be firm to get again the enormous wages of the autumn and winter. Some few *are* working at reduced wages; and one or two mills are going on speculation; but neither masters nor men view these concerns with favour. Men think that the acceptance of lower wages is betraying their interest, the silly fellows; and masters see that, now that this stoppage has come, there should be no half-measures—that the whole body of workmen should be made to understand what has happened, and to give over their idleness and their fondness for strikes. I believe we shall stand out."

"But then comes up another trouble; I have heard of rioting and threatenings. May there not be serious disturbances and dam with so large a population out work?"

Luscombe wiped his brow. "There may, and there will," he said. "We've done all we can—strengthened the police—and in some counties the militia are out. You should have seen the rush there was to fill our militia ranks when it was known that there would be quarters and food found. Couldn't trust the militia in billets in such a state of things, of course; they either occupy barracks or hired buildings—disused mills, generally, in this part of the country."

This didn't give a pleasant idea of what was proceeding; and my own observations astonished me more than my friend's words. Funneltown could hardly be recognised as the same place which had so interested me four months ago. The people were about the streets

as much as, or more than, ever; but all signs of their well-doing were gone. Drunkenness there was still, but it was not hilarious drunkenness; miserable beings reeled about the pavements, and lay in the gutters—the pains of hunger deadened by alcohol. But there was none of the boisterous assembling, no more excursions, no shows, no amusement. A very large number of shops were closed altogether; the wages which had been spent in them had stopped, and they had stopped. The flow of money through the place had almost ceased. The gay dresses of the women, the holiday-making, the shouts and laughter and luxuries, all were done, and there was a blight as upon a plague-stricken city. Indeed there was a great deal of sickness arising from the general misery. Hospitals and work-houses were crowded; and I believe there was a great deal of almsgiving, although that was contrary to the principle which the masters established. The troubles of one trade heightened those of other trades; and at last it was beyond controversy that the calamity was general. The very coal-miners, who were about the last to feel the reaction, were feeling it now. The consumption of coal in trade had almost ceased. The miners, by steadily refusing to collect the output, had forced manufacturers and shipowners to suspend their business. Panic was everywhere, and none dared order a supply larger than would satisfy the wants of the moment. Every day brought some fresh piece of bad news.

"Nice Budget we shall have after Easter, with all these soldiers out," said Luscombe, one evening. "The rates, of course, are enormous, with pauperism and police and sanitary precautions, and there's no money being got; how can this go on?"

"How, indeed!" I said; "and I find, too, that much of the discontent is now being directed against the Government."

"Serve them right, too; I used to uphold them once, but I see now that they are mainly answerable for the lawlessness and restless action of the ignorant masses. There would have been none of this trouble if the lower orders hadn't been made to understand that they might do as they liked."

The next morning we heard that a mill in a town about eight miles off, where the hands were working at reduced wages, had been attacked and burned in the night. That was not the worst part of the news; the manager's house, which was close to the mill, had been burned too, and two women and three little children had perished in the flames. The masters who were working on the same terms in Funneltown had received threatening notices, and it was feared that the success of the attempt at burning would incite the wild hands to further outrage.

"I'm pretty right myself," said Luscombe; "I've managed never to get to loggerheads with 'em; but I must do what I can to help others. Let's go into Funneltown this morning."

After our return he told me that they knew for certain that the mill of Caton Brothers would be attacked perhaps that night; and that possibly, now that incendiarism had begun, some others might suffer before morning.

"I mean to go in again quietly after dinner," said Luscombe; "will you come? Between ourselves, the military have been sent for, and we've got away women and children, thank God, from the threatened property."

Of course I went with him to Funneltown. Magistrates and mill-owners were collected in sections,

and with much secrecy, in different parts of the town. Messengers passed from one assembly to another, describing the states of the different quarters, which were being ascertained by trusty members of the police, and by one or two half-pay officers residing in the neighbourhood, who had volunteered their services.

I was in a room in Mr. Sower's mill in Dundergate, where we sat receiving reports and talking over the situation until near midnight. About that time there came news that an immense mob had suddenly assembled in Hayman's Piece, an open suburb; and presently after, the other sections of owners, one after another, came flocking to us, for we were nearest the mob, and not far from the mill which was understood to be threatened. The mayor, accompanied by several of the county magistrates, and followed at some distance, and quietly, by the police, had gone to try and induce the excited people to disperse. The next thing we heard was, that the mayor had been very rudely received,—defied, indeed; and that when he informed the people that troops were already in the town, who would certainly be called upon to act if violence should be attempted, he was answered with a shout of derision; for the malcontents did not know that their secrets had been betrayed two days before, and that the authorities had been able to take measures for keeping the peace. As soon as the mayor received his rebuff, the wing of a line regiment of infantry and a troop of heavy cavalry, which had been five hours in the place, and were standing in empty mill premises, ready to turn out, were ordered into the streets. But before the troops got the summons, the mob was already in motion, and moving by several minor streets upon a broad square called the Green, across which they had to

pass toward the Catons' mill. We all left the room where we had been talking and went to an upper floor of the mill, from which the green could be seen. In less than five minutes we could hear the immense multitude, which in some directions had overpowered the police by force and in others caused them to retreat in order, surging into the open space. The tramp of their walk and their mysterious painful murmuring were what we heard; there was not any shouting or yelling. By the lamp-light we saw at last the head of the formidable movement filling the whole square and moving on very slowly, as if waiting for the contributions from the streets in rear to come up and fall into the march behind them. The whole body paused after a while as if to have everything in order for an uninterrupted advance on the mill; and I could see the features of some of the foremost, all of whom looked stern and pitiless, while many, gaunt with famine, made one think of the cruel old zealots that one has read of. It was while I was scanning the faces that some movement was heard at the other end of the square; we could not see what it was, but in an instant the crowd below us sent up a yell of rage and execration, and a messenger entering told us that the soldiers were holding all the avenues in that direction. Presently the mayor advanced right within our view and called upon the people to disperse, but he was answered with threats and yells, and then some one by his side commenced reading, by the light of a lantern, what I suppose was the Riot Act; but this only acted like a spur to the rioters, who, having now made their arrangements, began to move on briskly. But the soldiers had by this time advanced to within our view. The mayor spoke a few words to an officer in front and we heard

in the darkness the commands from different voices—"Six file on the right, ready." "Six file on the left, ready." Whereupon a man ran out from the crowd followed by a few others, the first man shouting, "Don't flinch, boys. They'll fire in the air the first time." The word "Present" was heard through the darkness, and the crash of the rifles stunned all other sound and caused a momentary hush. Then there were groans and frantic cries: the advance of the multitude was checked; and we saw several persons on the ground, while the commotion among the rest showed them to be panic-stricken. They did not seem to be helping those that had fallen, but to be swaying about without a perceptible object. Meanwhile, through the windows on the other side of the mill, which did not look into the square, we heard the sound of horses' feet and the clang of arms. Running to that side we saw the dragoons passing down the road.

"I have it!" exclaimed one of our party; "they'll come up Dorks Lane and be in the midst of them."

Then we went back to our old post in time to hear the mayor once more urging the crowd to disperse, and while he was speaking there came a tumultuous terrified discord from behind, made up of all the loud notes of terror and pain. The dragoons had galloped into the mass, riding down many, and sabring, as we afterwards understood, several who attempted to seize the troopers' bridles. They forced their way right through the square, and then turned to ride back again; but, by the time they did so, there was a great change in the condition of things: the insurgents in rear were running off by the ways along which they had come; and the infantry now advancing upon the head of their array, the whole of those within our view turned and fled, policemen from out of the ground, or some equally mys-

terious ambush, now appearing to bear off the wounded, or to capture stray rioters. The streets were soon clear. They were patrolled all night; and our party remained in the mill. I had seen a sight which turned me sick—not the men falling, for though I knew they had been wounded, we could see none of them distinctly: no—it was the fresh blood on the troopers' swords as they trotted past a lamp at the time when the crowd gave way. I shall never forget that dreadful night.

"Fourteen shot, four of them dead: sword-wounds, eight, all living; trampled to death twenty-six, including three women and seven children: bruised, maimed, internally injured, seventy-two of both sexes, and all ages!" That was the miserable bulletin of the next morning. The poor creatures were taken to the Infirmary, where a boy of fourteen had his leg amputated, in consequence of the kick of a horse; a man shot through the spine died after three days of intense agony; another lost the use of his right arm by a sabre-wound,—and all suffered more or less. The gloom after this was greater than ever, but there was no further outrage in our neighbourhood. The men's irritability took another direction. The clubs and trades-unions quarrelled among themselves. Their funds were speedily dissipated, there were manifest symptoms that the men were giving way, and in fine, after a few futile attempts to make terms, there was an absolute surrender, those who could be employed (for there was not work for half) consenting to work, and binding themselves for a term to work for moderate wages. As soon as ever this was adjusted, efforts were made for the relief of those unemployed; fortunately for them prices had already begun to yield, and there was a hope that business, the check to which had been artificial,

would recover in a short time. Meantime the burden was heavy upon most. The masters who had least to complain of—of whom I am happy to say that my friend Luscombe was one—smarted to an extent from which they could not recover for many years. Others who had been less cautious were some obliged to stop, others enabled to keep going only by the sacrifice of their property, and the suppression of all the grandeur and show in which they had taken so much pride. As for the workmen, those who were fortunate enough to get work were glad to give over their idleness and dissolute living, and so profit by the sad experience they had gone through. Those who were still unemployed desired for the most part to emigrate; but having no means, they had to refer their wishes to societies and public departments, who, hoping that trade would speedily revive, did not encourage the workmen to expatriate themselves. Before my leave came to an end the worst was certainly past. Luscombe said he didn't think he should go to Scarborough that summer (I don't think that, with their appearance reduced as it must be, they would like to go, even if he could get away from his mills), but hoped we should meet again somewhere before long. I saw with pleasure that he didn't like parting with me; and there were so many last words, and expressions of anxiety and hopefulness by turns, that I had hardly the time necessary for going to the station. However, by putting the horse along we were on the platform just as the train was moving off. My luggage disappeared in a trice I don't know how. The guard was holding the door open for me, and I had hardly time to spring in before—

"Why have you turned back so suddenly from the chamber of smoke?" asked Dr. Manassé.

"Eh! how?" I exclaimed; "I thought I was in the railway train." What in the world had happened? Was I mad, or had the world turned upside down? There were the pipes and the cushions. I appeared to have just passed back over the threshold of the chamber of smoke. Sheik Omar stood before me bearing coffee. Good heaven! it was exactly the scene in which I had stood last summer before the stirring events occurred which I have narrated in these last two chapters.

"Compose yourself. I am *en rapport* with you. You should have remained in the chamber. Deign to take coffee. It is refreshing," said the doctor.

"Coffee!" I exclaimed; "why, how have I come hither again? How can the evening in July 1872 be reproduced when I have lived on, and wearily too, till the spring of 1873? Is this sorcery, or trickery, or what is it?"

"I had the honour to tell you that we would speak of the prices and the labour. Our souls have conversed. You have seen what is possible; but perhaps it may not be. You are informed."

"I should think I am," I replied, hardly knowing what I said. And now I ask any one to explain to me how I have lived on to Easter 1873, while the rest of the world is still behind in the summer of 1872. We have men of science enough ready to deal with all the most difficult phenomena. Will any of them solve this problem? Will the British Association take it in hand? Will any reader of *Maga* help a poor devil who is habitually a shunner of mysteries, but is fearfully perplexed?

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THE BRITISH TOURIST IN NORWAY.—CONCLUSION.

I FIND it to be a prevailing opinion among the well-formed and thoughtful people who know physical geography and its relation to population over the surface of the globe generally, that Norway is a thinly-peopled country. I am prepared to contradict this opinion, and to expose it as a popular delusion. True, its territory, running over some fifteen degrees of latitude, contains little more than a million and a half of people. If you say that it is scantily peopled, that the population is small in comparison with the area or the total of square miles,—if you use an expression that balances the population with the surface—I admit the use of any term expressive of the diminutiveness of the population. But to indorse the term “thinly-peopled” would be, to use a favourite expression of our old friend De Quincey, to become embarrassed by “illogicality in the conditions.” On the contrary, in none of my sojournings have I ever found myself in a country so thickly peopled as Norway. Where the people are, they throng, and it may be said that they are wherever they can find accessible standing room. The portion of the country that is not made of stone in almost perpendicular masses is very small, but this small portion is well filled. It is to be found in the deltas of diluvium—narrow strips edging the lower reaches of the rivers, and broadening when they join the sea in some Fiord. Where there is an accessible sheltered spot up in the mountains, with available patches of pasture at hand, there too lives a group of people crowded together in a Gaard or conglomerate of farm-houses—half fortress, half village.

This populousness of narrow plains

is sometimes annoying to the wanderer who, having seen enough of the inhabitancy of the land, wants to get into its solitudes. There is, for instance, a central road or street with houses on either side. If you diverge among them to the right or to the left, still house after house. A great rock rising before you must be the end; but when you turn its corner there opens a narrow gorge with a double string of houses holding fast as it were by the steep bank, and when you have reached the last house you have taken your own last step, for there rises over it a process of crags too abrupt to give you any hope of exit, even if you had the nimbleness and sure-footedness of a goat.

These houses have at first sight the interest that all novelty has, but they do not improve on acquaintance. They are of wood raised on a foundation or platform of stone. This consists in great boulders brought from the moraines. There is nothing to mark the age of these buildings. The basement of stone might have been laid down yesterday, or may have supported the hut of one of the Viking warriors that infested our shores in the eighth century, for all that externals reveal. Indeed science tells us that the blocks in the moraine must have lain there exposed to the antiquating influences of time for the uncounted thousands of years since the glacier or other now extinct force laid them down. The fir planks raised above are of course more ephemeral stuff than the boulders of the moraines, but they too have a touch of the ancient and the storm-beaten about them; and from note I have taken of the condition of old timber-work in the churches of

Norway, probably to be afterward referred to, it would not surprise me if archaeologists should bring home a high antiquity to some of these humble log-houses. I think it likely that the timbers of some of these houses may be centuries old, and that others are ancient by descent, as it were, in having the planks renewed from time to time as they decayed; so that all the curious arguments about the identity of the oft-restored ship *Argo*, might be repeated in the question whether such a house is or is not that which originally was built where it now stands. There is a grim air of age about these hovels that would give them an interest, but for one unpleasant feature. From an orifice in the wooden part, just above the stone, and of course below the floor occupied by bipeds, there comes forth in continuous descent a valuable but not æsthetically interesting accumulation of organic matter, informing the passer-by of inhabitancy by quadrupeds.

There are perhaps few or no cows to be seen where these undoubted attestations of their existence are—indeed there is no room for them in the open air. But some scrambling among the surrounding rocks may reveal the reason both for the abundance of houses and the absence of perceptible cattle. If there is any track up among the rocks sufficiently distinct to deserve the name of footpath, it leads to small patches of grass where the cattle graze occasionally, enclosed by high walls of rock, which preclude escape save by the footpath that leads them home. Above these again, in spots inaccessible to the cattle, are patches or tufts of sweet herbage, which the industrious peasants cut and carry down. It is sometimes indeed an almost startling incident to the rambler, when he has with extreme

difficulty, and what he may deem an outlay of skill and courage, reached some halting-place in the rough ascent, in which his hands are as useful to him as his feet, to find there a family from the village far down below, who are tempted by a scanty harvest of grass to undertake the labour and peril of its removal.

While setting down these reminiscences, I find the peculiar physical geography they refer to boldly sketched by one who had a long experience of Scandinavian travel; and as I propose to draw some conclusions of possible use to the future sojourner in Norway from these physical peculiarities, I set down what he says in confirmation of my own experience.

“Rivers of great volume of water, but generally of short and rapid course, pour into the Fjords from the Fjelds or high table-land behind, which forms the body or mass of the country. It is on the flat spots of arable land on the borders of these Fjords, rivers, and the lakes into which the rivers expand, that the population lives. In some of these river-valleys and sea-valleys a single farm of a few acres of land is only found here and there in many miles of country, the bare rock dipping at once into the blue water, and leaving no margin for cultivation. In others, narrow slips of inhabitable arable land extend some way, but are hemmed in behind, on the other side, by the rocky ridges which form the valley; and they are seldom broad enough to admit of two rows of little farms, or even of two large fields, in the breadth between the hill-foot and the water; and in the length are often interrupted by some bare prong of rock jutting from the ridge-side into the slip of arable level land, and dividing it from such another slip. All the land capable of cultivation either with spade or plough has been cultivated from the most remote times; and there is little room for improvement, because it is the ground-rock destitute of soil, not merely trees or loose rocks encumbering the soil, that opposes human industry. The little

estates, not averaging fifty acres each of arable land, are densely inhabited."*

Here, then, is a country thoroughly destitute of some of the standing grievances of him who travels in the primitive fashion, with his staff and wallet. No long stretches of park belonging to wayside mansions, no protracted acreage of turnips, potatoes, and wheat, lying between him and that glorious mountain-land which beckons him onward through the dusty endless road. All is close at hand—the great mountains on the one hand, the deep blue waters on the other. And yet I would feel remorse of conscience were I to certify Norway as that paradise of pedestrians it is often understood to be. For all the secondary purposes of pedestrianism, for stray devious wanderings from central points, or more systematic expeditions to some cataract or glacier, there are inexhaustible resources to the pedestrian,—resources of which, in many instances, he has the undisputed monopoly. But I question if Norway is the best place in the world for that highest development of the enjoyment of the young pedestrian, when he sets forth with his knapsack on his back and his staff in his hand, and wanders for weeks with no other guidance but his map and his compass, storing up an affluent harvest of teeming recollections never to be lost or slighted, though his future summers

"To such length of years should
come
As the many-wintered crow that leads the
clanging rookery home."

Murray, in his 'Knapsack Guide to Norway'—full of excellent advice about posting, though silent about the knapsack everywhere but in the title page—informs us that "Norway is capital ground for a pedestrian

tour. The usual mode of traversing the land-routes is, however, by posting, which is admirably arranged to suit the wants and convenience of the people" (p. 5)—whence the legitimate inference is, that the water-routes are the proper track for pedestrians. I suspect that the pedestrian, if he is ambitious of more than mere walks or rambles—if he is ambitious of travelling a few hundred miles on end at say from 80 to 40 miles a day—must in Norway content himself with the great highways. From traditions of the old state of these roads, they appear to have been rugged and dangerous—sometimes not to be very distinctly traced through bogs or over great scalps of rock—and in sundry other respects endowed with the elements of the adventurous and romantic. They are now, however, among the finest highways in Europe. True, they have steep and long ascents and descents, but the zigzagging of them is among the wonders of the world, as transcendent specimens of the engineering skill that is ever smoothening our way over the physical difficulties of its surface. Then in the touring season these roads, and especially those stretches most richly endowed with scenery, are a thronged thoroughfare for multitudes of carriages and vehicles more ambitious. These are not such features that the meditative pedestrian would spontaneously select as lending a charm to his adventures. If he desire to shake off all such memorials of the life he has left behind him, and "take to the hill," after the fashion that has so many charms for the wanderer in our own Highlands, and fortunately in many other regions, my experience leads me to believe that he will find insuperable difficulties, and these in the

* Laling's Introduction to the Chronicle of the Kings of Norway, i. 108, 109.

places where deviation from the beaten track is most seductive. It is probably in the high table-lands, where the country is comparatively flat, and there is least to attract the lover of scenery, that deviation is least impeded. It is not easy to form general conclusions about all parts of so vast a portion of the earth's surface as Norway covers. But I can say from my own experience, that at points severed from each other—in some occasions in latitude, in others in longitude—by hundreds of miles, I have found myself utterly baffled in attempts to deviate from the highroad and penetrate the wall of rock on either side. And I have found the difficulty accompanied by an incidental feature of a very provoking kind. After pursuing for many a mile the broad road, there turns off from it a lateral path of the most attractive character, winding up through the forest-girdle of the mountain under the shade of great trees. When you have followed it for several miles, behold it leads you up to a Gaard or a mansion-house nestling in an amphitheatre of great precipices, which frown on you a stern prohibition of further progress, and send you back to the highway in no benignant humour. But let us cheer up, and look at the whole affair with its lights as well as its shades, and then will the true lover of mountain scenery find reason to rejoice at that dispensation which caused the waters of the ocean to find their way right through the central regions of this great cake of rock, so as to reveal its awful beauties to the frequenters of those smooth sheltered waters in the Fiords.

And now let me endeavour to show how these grand peculiarities of physical structure are connected with grand and memorable events in the history of the human race

—events in the significance and grandeur of which the British people have a large historical participation. It was from these Fiords, and from beneath the shadow of their mighty rocks, that in times long past the hundreds of thousands of war-ships sent their crews first to plunder the coasts of Britain, and next to colonise them, so as to found the great race over which Queen Victoria holds rule.

The problem seems a puzzling one, how the country that can feed but a million and a half of people should have supplied us with the larger and the better part of our thirty millions; but the whole can be reconciled. Let us approach it in grades, from smaller instances of a like phenomenon. The problem in its simple form is, how to feed more people than the ground on which they stand can grow food for. There are two separate solutions: the one is, that they buy their food from without; and the other is, that they take it without paying for it,—and this is the alternative we have to deal with.

The Rookeries in the old towns are now well known from Scott's description of Alsace, and Victor Hugo's imitation of it in his '*Nôtre Dame*.' They were tribes of people that sowed not, neither did they spin, but they occupied a district fortified against the intrusion of the law, and thence they issued from time to time to plunder their neighbours. Let us look to a similar establishment, fresher and healthier in its physical condition, whatever we may say of its moral—the Border-land between the England and Scotland of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The curse of barrenness was upon it, but that very barrenness was made a source of wealth by the ingenious Borderer, for it made his abode inaccessible, and enabled him to stock

his larder and furnish his grim peel-house. Such were they

"Who drove the beeves that made their
broth,
From England and from Scotland both."

Take another and more eminent instance. Why were Highland glens of old populous and wealthy? Because their people lived on the wealth created by their industrious, plodding, Lowland neighbours. Let us mount a step higher still in the scale of robber communities, and look at the chains of ruined fortresses along the banks of the Rhine. If the basaltic terraces of the seven mountains provided wine for the owners and their garrisons, it was doing as much as their arid stony surfaces could be expected to do. The filling up of the other elements of wealth, and good cheer, and lordly munificence, were forced upon the humble trader, who was glad to compound for a tax or toll, and so sacrifice a percentage of his gains to save the rest.

Another expansive step will realise to us Norway and its Fiords as a great maritime stronghold—a process of vast fortified harbours of refuge, calculated for the assembling and sheltering of countless fleets. With such conditions to deal with, no numbers need surprise us. A fortified town sends out army after army of some fifty thousand men each, because it is the gathering centre to which they converge from distant feeding-grounds. Hence, from the roadsteads, so meagrely frequented by shipping that the behests of the British pleasure-seeker make a material feature in it, and from the most scantily peopled territory of Europe, are poured the ships in thousands, are poured the warriors in hundreds of thousands. It matters not where these warriors were born, or whence their ancestors had migrated. The

land-locked seas of Norway were the fastnesses whence they pounced upon their prey—the impregnable retreats to which they returned with it. Mr. Samuel Laing, the elder, aptly introduces his translation of the Norse 'Chronicle of the Kings of Norway' with an account of the physical geography that made their adventurous history what it is. One part of it is already cited, and here is another:—

"The Scandinavian peninsula consists of a vast table of mountain-land, too elevated in general for cultivation, or even for the pasturage of large herds or flocks together in any one locality; and although sloping gently towards the Baltic or the Sound on the Swedish side, and there susceptible of the same inhabitation and husbandry as other countries, in as far as climate and soil will allow, on the other side—the proper country of the Northmen—throwing out towards the sea, all round, huge prongs of rocky and lofty ridges, either totally bare of soil or covered with pine-forests, growing apparently out of the very rock, and with no useful soil beneath them. The valleys and deep glens between these ridges, which shoot up into lofty pinacles, precipices, and mountains, are filled at the lower end by the ocean forming Fiords, as these inlets of the sea are called, which run far up into the land, in some cases a hundred miles or more; yet so narrow that the stones, it is said, rolling down from the mountain-slope on one side of such a Fiord, are often projected from the steep overhanging precipice in which the slope half-way down ends, across to the opposite shore. These Fiords in general, however, are fine expanses of inland lakes of the ocean—calm, deep, pure, blue, and shut in on every side by black precipices and green forests, and with fair wooded islets sleeping on the bosom of the water."—(P. 108.)

Here is a good succinct account of the physical features that made so convenient a watery den or fortress for the sea-robbers that owned keels in thousands. The precision of the statement is at once recognised by

the visitor to the Fiords; and to complete the description of effective naval shelter, it seems merely proper to note that, except where the large rivers pour into them, there are no shallows in the Fiords. There the small recesses or bays where the light vessels of the sea-rovers might bring-to are countless, and in these a substitute for moorage might be found by securing the vessel to a trunk of a tree.

Here, then, Nature had prepared everything suited to give protection and assistance to the sea-rovers; but whence came they? If the coasts of Europe were as defenceless as they were in the ninth century, the Norway of the present time has not men sufficient in number to trouble them. To find how the great human swarm that not only tormented our coasts but thronged them with colonists could have existed, ethnologists have theorised a grand emigration from the Eastern world. But is that necessary? The Roman Empire, in its aggrandisement and its misfortunes, created great pulsations throughout the population of northern Europe. Charlemagne, when reconstructing the Empire, enlarged it towards the north, and drove great hordes of people to desperation. Among the typical stories of history is that one where the great Emperor fell a-crying when he saw the white sails of the plundering Northmen hovering off shore in the Mediterranean. He realised at once the effect of his hard usage of the Saxons, as the inhabitants of North Germany were called. He had been a bad father to them—had driven them out of doors—and they had taken to the highway, like ill-used sons not endowed with superfluous virtue, and the water was their highway. The various attempts to make strong governments in northern Europe sent forth auxiliary swarms to those that had been

drawn by earlier migrations into the great sea-fortress whence they could issue to sweep the coasts of France, Britain, Ireland, and Spain, entering the Mediterranean, to do in Italy, Sicily, and the Bosphorus much as they pleased, and crossing the Atlantic till they found a land of vines somewhere in America. Such were the conditions, historical and physical, that put fleets of hardy sea-warriors into the hands of men like Harald Haarfagre (or the Fair-haired), Ragnar Lodbroc, Olave the Black, Ketyl the Flat-nosed, Eric the Skull-cleaver, and others with names of a like expressive kind. It harmonises with this idea of the availability of the Fiords for the purposes of these marauders, that they found a sort of outpost sea-fortress in a line of coast where the same physical features were to be found on a smaller scale—the west coast of Scotland and the Hebrides. Here there was a station very convenient for furthering the plans of the Vikings. It not only helped them in their inroads in Scotland and the north of England, but formed a base of operations upon the east coast of Ireland, where they established a large and flourishing colony. And it is curious to note, that as the wealth brought to Norway by the enterprise of the sea-rovers made that country notably rich for a period far down through the middle ages, so it would appear not only from traditions but from accounts of the quantities of wine and other luxuries consumed in the sixteenth century in the Western Isles of Scotland, that they also long retained a remnant of what we would call, according to the prejudices of the present day, “very ill-gotten gear.”

These Northmen were not by nature pirates and plunderers, any more than we are, for indeed they were our ancestors. Also it must

be admitted that with us the pirate spirit dwelt far down into recent history. Many ugly tricks were played on the "Spanish main," which was a sort of Hounslow Heath of the sea, notorious for acts of lawless rapine. These were rife in the days of the buccaneers; and down to the period of Anson's achievements it was difficult for a strong ship to resist the temptation to pick a quarrel with one belonging to another nation, if it were weak in fighting-power and carried a rich cargo. But we have got over all this. We are the repressers of all injustice and tyranny on the sea, and our commercial enterprise is supreme, penetrating to the utmost extremities of the earth. Why is it, then, that those descendants of our common ancestors, who remained in their old sea-fortress, failed to become like us, numerous, enterprising, and rich? Simply because they had not standing-room. The very physical conditions that made them the terror of the world in lawless days were unsuited for the nourishment of a population increasing in numbers and in wealth. Commercial prosperity demands something more than sea-room. It demands store-rooms and manufactories on the land; and when by reason of these store-rooms and manufactories men have become wealthy, they demand a broad area for the enjoyment of their wealth in gardens, parks, and other outward and visible signs of affluence and power. None of these were for the Northmen at home; and therefore, as the rise of the great powers suppressed their marauding expeditions, gradually the great bulk of them settled on fruitful territories in Germany, Britain, and France. Even yet they are on the move, drafting emigrants to the United States, where they will make about the best

blood that America can boast of. Of the residuary population left to inhabit the rocky cradle whence so vast a family had swarmed off, we have the following brief expressive account in the words of the venerable Orcadian, to whose practical sagacity and long experience of Scandinavian life we have been already indebted:—

"The extent of every little property has been settled for ages, and want of soil and space prevents any alteration in the extent, and keeps it within the unchangeable boundaries of rock and water. It is highly interesting to look at these original little family estates of the men who in the ninth and tenth centuries played so important a part in the finest countries in Europe—who were the origin of the men and events we see at this day—and whose descendants are now seated on the thrones and in the palaces of Europe, and in the West are making a new world of social arrangements for themselves. The sites and even the names of the little estates or gaards on which these men were born remain unchanged, in many instances, to this day; and the posterity of the original proprietors of the ninth century may reasonably be supposed, in a country in which the land is entailed by *udal* right upon the family, to be at this day the possessors—engaged, however, now in cutting wood for the French and Newcastle market, instead of in conquering Normandy and Northumberland." *

There is something of a novel interest in this population, existing on the face of a vast territory, yet hindered by great barriers of stone from spreading over its surface, or finding any place for increasing numbers. It is a social condition that has not received sufficient consideration from the economists, political and social. Malthus gained a reputation that had in it something of the awful when he proved by diagram that in the civilised communities of Europe, while population increased in some-

thing like geometrical ratio, the increase of the means of subsistence grudgingly crept onwards in arithmetical ratio; so thus the time was not far distant when there would be a "surplus population," and this meant people, in thousands or millions as it might be, who had nothing to eat, and who, starving, must die. The diagrams were fallacious by reason that human beings can only be where they are for the time, each of them a unit in his place, while the food they may be fed with can be brought from everywhere. But still the human being, to be at his ease, requires a certain amount of space available to him at his will; and here, though the space exists in enormous superabundance, it is not available.

The migration from Norway to America is large, but it is not, as in Ireland, impulsive and in mobs. Yet there is a small, continued, uniform procession of those who find insufficient elbow-room in the old country. They pass through Britain, and one cannot help wishing that they would stay with us—a more wholesome new blood could not be distributed among our population. Indeed it somewhat humbles a native of Britain to see them on their own ground. The physical or geological conditions that limit the amount of population, and require that the growing surplus be removed as it grows, absolutely exclude contaminating mixtures from intruding races. We have among us men like these Norwegians—tall, broad-shouldered, abounding in muscle, blood, and bone—but unfortunately we have beings of another kind in the slums of our cities, and also in the huts of our agriculturists. In the men of the western coast of Norway one recognises at once the same family that are the old stock of the eastern side of Britain, from the Humber to Caithness. It is a thing both to re-

gret and be ashamed of, that our tourists are doing their utmost to spoil this fine people. Perhaps their utmost is not much, for a high-spirited independent race will not at once be converted into showmen and lackeys. But there are always some that are open to the temptations of unworthy gains, and the polluting matter leaves its loathsome track, like a gutter passing through a green meadow. I never noticed any of its fatal influences on the adult population. There is the hospitality, the friendliness, the "ancient faith that knows no guile," the honest eye that is never caught watching with a greedy wolfish side-glance the hand that may be seeking out the coin. But I noticed evil symptoms among the young, and it is on these only that the contamination of the tourist mob has had time to operate. The Norwegian nature will not take to docile civility and subserviency, like your Italians and Swiss, who have been accustomed from generation to generation to minister to the humours of the wealthy and capricious stranger. I saw enough among the boys at the post and steamboat stations to show that they are likely to grow, by reason of the temptations they are subject to, into vicious and dangerous men. They demand money loudly and fiercely. The amount generally specified is small, no doubt; however, it may increase with the growth of the persecutors. If the highly-distinguished Stor Englander may in general pass excused from a knowledge of the amount of cash demanded, a Scotchman will hardly be justified in mistaking the meaning of "gee me een phenning." There is none of the mendicant whine in the request; in fact it is a demand. On its being refused or ignored, I have heard on occasion an outburst of filth, ribaldry, and blasphemy uttered in the very purest of English

and altogether with a style that would do credit to Whitechapel. This is the mark of their presence that young English gentlemen have left among these boys. I was about to call it the impression left upon their minds, but that would be wrong. I am comfortable in the reflection that the creatures had no consciousness of the meaning of the words they used; and here, by the way, I am reminded of instances where the boys took a way of their own for expressing their sentiments—no other than the very distinct one of stoning. I experienced the practice in more than one place; but the severest attack was in the neighbourhood of the far-famed Naase of Norway. A blow from any of their lumps of granite might have been serious, but they did not know how to throw a stone; they heaved it upwards from the palm of the hand, instead of discharging it with the full force of the arm from between the thumb and two neighbouring fingers: and they seemed exceedingly astonished to receive in return a rapid discharge of small shot, after the method pursued in our school stone-bickers of old.

In those social customs by which the two sexes, male and female, are either separated or not separated from each other, the Norse folk differ from us. This difference has been long proclaimed by travellers in Scandinavia, and becomes immediately obvious to the stranger sojourning there. If we are on the wrong side of the difference, our defect comes under the reproach of prudery; and if the others are on the wrong side, it comes under any term you may be pleased to select as antithetic to prudery. On which side the deficit in the balance stands is perhaps of all the more consequence, that in these days there are prophets proclaiming that our fastidiousness, or prudery, is a rank

growth of diseased social refinement and should be annihilated as our grandparents annihilated powder-puffs, pomatum patches, and the enamelling of the skin. Perhaps a Commission should be sent to Norway to collect evidence, and report. It is said that the promiscuousness of Norse life nourishes purity of thought, whence comes morality of conduct; but it is also said that statistics point the other way. We shall never know the truth in this country, after the fashion of legitimate knowledge, until we have it all presented to both Houses of Parliament in a blue-book, dispersed in a shower of paragraphs in the newspapers.

Meanwhile, to the solitary wanderer who can easily dispose of himself, it becomes matter of wonder how some classes of our tourists get over the difficulties of the domestic contrasts they have to encounter. For instance, you shall see a new timber hotel run up during the winter and spring, through the forcing influence of an unprecedented swarm of tourists that had settled down on the spot in the preceding season. There is a beautiful simplicity in the cubicular organisation. One door gives entrance to some half-dozen of bedrooms, either in a row or coming back to the entrance-door in a circle. Now there have been, and probably still are, conditions in which such an arrangement may be very valuable. Take the instance—now matter of the past—when the anxious election agent has a handful of slippery voters, who are to be disposed of for the night, in so advanced a stage of intoxication that there is no chance of any exercise of free-will for a few hours; yet when these hours expire there may be an escape,—what so convenient as that the shepherd should take his rest at the entrance to the fold? The suite—literally

entitled to that name—the suite of apartments might be well adapted to accommodate a body of mild lunatics taking an excursion under keepers. So also it might be adapted to the pupils of a small boarding-school, male or female, travelling under tutorial superintendence. But suppose there tumble in some evening, one by one and two by two, a party finally consisting of, say, one unprotected female, a mother and two daughters, a couple of male students, a commercial gent, and an aged invalid male person, with an attendant who has to parade the house three or four times during the night, preparing possets and heating flannels for the martyr!

In fact, however, the unprotected male in Norway is scarcely in better stead if he procure a separate sleeping-place. The presence within it of many articles for household use suggests to him that it may occasionally be liable to invasion, and he looks for a fastening, but finds none. His anticipations are fulfilled—persons of the female sex, of any age, walking into his chamber at any hour and transacting their own business there, as if it were a dairy or a laundry. The natural inference from these conditions is, that the human being in a state of decomposition as to raiment is not so startling and offensive a phenomenon as it is held to be with us. And yet I have heard young men say, that when following home customs, and consequently caught in a very unrepresentable condition by a sudden opening of the door, the obtrusive nymph would start and rush forth with a shriek that might do credit to any lady's-maid who, in a hotel or a strange mansion, has opened by accident the wrong bedroom door.

I don't consider myself responsible for the solution of these incongruities. If they are worth solving,

they will be made clear at some time or other. Meanwhile a paradoxical friend suggests the broad solution that the Norse people don't undress. I could not help admitting that, in the clothing of the men in the interior, there is something that seems to fit with ludicrous precision into this theory. The exterior visible surface is generally of leather, close fitting and hard. Its surface seems to have caught accumulated smearings of various kinds, which long rubbing against the world and beating against the wind has hardened down into a sort of shining varnished crust or dirty enamel. As an alternative, it may be compared to the shell-covering of some large dusky crustacean. You cannot doubt that it would resist any attempt to escape from it, and that if an effort were made to peel it off, it would break rather than yield. Shall we, then, concur in the view of our paradoxical friend, that these raiments are only removed when the death of their inmate renders it desirable that, if practicable, they should be transferred to his son and successor?

Let us now turn from the outer to the inner man, and look at the character of the Norseman in his relation to those practices which are characterised as conviviality, good-fellowship, inebriety, drunkenness, and by other terms dropping from the eulogistic, or at least the tolerant, down to the denunciatory, often more by reason of the temper of the speaker than the real character of the act he describes. We are interested in this matter, both because comparisons—more odious than the average of comparisons—have been made between our own sins in this shape and those of the Norwegians, and also because it is maintained that those who know the way to cure this defect in human nature have taken strong steps for a cure

in Norway, and have been successful. Astounding revelations were made in the amusing and instructive narrative of Mr. Henry Ingliis, published in 1829. Here follow some specimens of them :—

“At half after eight we were called to supper, which, from the dishes that composed it, might have been mistaken for dinner. We had fish, flesh, and fowl, vegetables and pancakes. This last dish is eaten in Norway with preserved cherries between each layer of pancakes, which are made as thin as wafers. There is a great difference in the corn-brandy that is made in different parts of Norway, both in flavour and strength. That which I drank at supper was as strong as the best English gin; and it was truly surprising to witness the quantity taken by the male branches of the family. The old man drank three cups of it, each holding more, by at least one-half, than a claret-glass. Few things indeed strike the traveller in these parts more forcibly than the vast consumption of this spirit; and however expensive, or however unfavourable to moral habits, the excellent health which the people enjoy, and the great age to which they in general live, scarcely bear out the physiologist in his denunciation against spirituous liquor as injurious to the constitution. This old Telemarken farmer was seventy-four; and although he seemed that age, yet he was what we should call a healthy and hale old man. He said he had all his life enjoyed good health, and he ascribed this in a great measure to his excellent corn-brandy. The old woman had seen her seventy-eighth year, and although blind, she enjoyed good health, and did not decline her own more moderate share of the *elixir vite*.”—P. 103.

“A man who resided in the neighbourhood of the *Stor Soen*, was seized with a fever while I was in that part of the country, and died. His brother was asked if the deceased had got brandy and pepper. ‘Yes,’ replied he; ‘and yet he died.’ ‘Ah,’ said the brother of the dead man, ‘if he had only drunk it faster, he would have lived.’ If a man recover from a fever, it is the brandy and pepper that has accomplished the cure;—if he die, he has not taken enough of it; and the natural disinclination which is felt by

one in a high fever towards such a mixture, tends to favour the delusion that he dies because he does not drink enough.”—P. 207.

“Hearing of a man who had died at sixty-six, I one day said in company that he had had a reasonable lease of life. But the astonished faces and exclamations of the guests, some of whom had already considerably passed the grand climacteric, showed me that their expectations would hardly be satisfied with such a limit. It is certain that even among the Norwegians who most freely indulge in the use of brandy, it is impossible to discover any of those common indications of intemperance which in England are easily discernible in the countenances of hard drinkers; and when a Norwegian is toasting over his cup of brandy, it is not purely from good-fellowship and love of the liquor that he does so, thinking all the while that there is poison in the cup; on the contrary, he conscientiously believes that in every cup there is a drop of the *elixir vite*. It is certainly not from any ill effects produced upon the health of the Norwegian, but from the injury done to his pocket, that the use of brandy ought in fairness to be reprobated. Nor does it usually in Norway, as in more southern countries, lead to other vices. The Norwegian, in his cups, does not seem disposed to change his occupation for fighting, or any species of intemperate folly or vice; and I believe nothing would more surprise an inhabitant of the sister isle and a frequenter of Donnybrook, than the spectacle of a crowd of drunken Norwegians. Punch is a mixture of which the Norwegian is so fond, that he will drink it even without any view towards the benefit of his health. I recollect dining with a party of Norwegians in Holmestrand, when, after one of the party had drunk as much as he possibly could, ‘I can drink no more,’ said he, ‘but set the bowl under my nose.’”—P. 209.

But the Norwegians of that day could also pass the flowing bowl in what is counted its nobler shape :—

“The party to the country consisted of twelve, and was conveyed in two carriages, and four horses to each. The circumstances of this excursion have left little recollection behind; and

when I tell the reader that forty bottles of *Bordeaux* made into bishop were drunk by twelve persons, my forgetfulness may possibly be attributed to a wrong cause; and indeed, if I had taken my twelfth part of these forty bottles, it would scarcely have been consistent with the veracity of a traveller to have denied the accuracy of the conclusion."—P. 58.

Leaving the wine to take care of itself, Mr. Inglis suggested the strong hand of the law as a remedy for the common form of intemperance:—

"To the lower orders, who do not distil, the cheapness of corn-brandy is a great curse. The use of coffee is prohibited in Sweden. Tobacco, it is said, has lately been interdicted by the head of the celestial empire. What country will set the example in prohibiting the use of poison in the shape of cheap spirit?"—P. 201.

These experiences are now nearly half a century old. It is said that all is now changed in the direction of amendment. It may be so; there has been improvement in such matters among ourselves, and there may be like or greater improvements in Norway. I can give none but negative testimony to the point. The casual rambler is seeking his own pleasure, not acting the inquisitor or moral anatomist; and very dismal depths of iniquity, as well as sublime emanations of virtue, may fail to catch his eye. I can only recall to memory a good deal of jollity or conviviality, but very little drunkenness.

Let us admit, however, that there has been a great amendment; let us call it a great "revival of sobriety," a term certainly admissible, since men must have been sober before they knew how to distil or ferment. The interesting point for home example is, that the blessed result

is attributed to the coercive acts of a strong and paternal government. Let us look at this, for it is instructive, about the capacity of the State to deal with such difficulties, and the limits of that capacity.

Police impediments in the way of obtaining intoxicants are very conspicuous to every one who travels in Norway, and here is an instance of their effect while they were yet fresh, and ingenuity had not found the way to baffle them:—

"Private stills are forbidden, and spirits are only allowed to be sold in the towns. Public morals have no doubt gained in consequence, though the traveller at times is put to inconvenience. The small stock of spirits which I had brought with me from Christiania being consumed, I endeavored to have it replenished at Sundalesoeren, but learned that nothing of the kind could be procured nearer than Christiansund. This was very inconvenient, for the labour and exposure to which a traveller or sportsman is subject in this country make the stimulus of a little mountain-dew very acceptable to the wearied frame.

"In this strait, I heard talk of a recent wedding in the neighborhood. I took this hint, and went with an empty bottle to the house of feasting. Drawing the peasant on one side, I made him understand the object of my errand. At first the answer was that it was quite impossible: it was true the small cask which he had purchased in the town was not empty, but then to sell it was 'imod loven,'—contrary to law. And then the neighbours would hear of it, and he would be fined, I don't know how many dollars. The colloquy ended by my passing certain Norwegian coins into my friend's hand, and returning with a bottleful of brandy in my pocket."*

This touching narrative recalls the sensation of reading the turning-point in a romance when the evil genius is subdued by the good angel, and all put to rights. One cannot but sympathise with the ex-

* The Oxonian in Norway, l. 173, 173 (1856).

pert achiever of the filled bottle. But what is the moral of the tale in its reference to the laws for the suppression of intemperance among the Norwegian people? A foreigner succeeds in diverting to his own use a portion of the liquid intended for home consumption, and it is not the home consumption, but the interference with it, occasioned by the stranger's success, that is a crime to be punished. It may be noted, too, that in thus restricting the means of joviality at a marriage festival, this author, who prefixes reverend to his name, acted signally in contrast with the example set by his sacred Master. But Norse ideas on conviviality are large and liberal, and he might console himself with the reflection, that probably there was a sufficient supply still left for all purposes of harmless enjoyment.

This was in the early days of the restrictive system, when probably a crop of counter-irritants had not arisen to neutralise it. But at the present day, in passing through the streets of the smaller towns, and looking as a stranger generally does, at the signs and the articles in the shop-windows, he will not see anything to make it known that ardent spirits are part of the retail commerce of the place; but at the same time, if he be observant, he will certainly be astonished at the proportion to the other shops of those professing to deal in wine. It appeals, in the "dressed-up" shop-windows, to the patrons of all known vintages, with seductive assurances of authenticity and quality, conspicuous among which is, "fin Port Vin," certified as genuine from London. I can't say whether this supremacy of commercial display in favour of wine represents an actual preponderance of public favour in consumption; but it naturally asso-

ciated itself with another peculiarity—that hotels in Norway are not generally licensed for the consumption of distilled liquors. Perhaps there may be some reason for this as a regulation for police purposes; but if it is intended to prevent the frequenters of the hotels from following their own inclinations, it is not effective.

I was amused, however, by the startling influence of the discovery of this peculiarity on a member of a jolly profession. Expressing his indignation against it, and his exultation in his triumph over it, I asked him what he did. "What did I do? I ran back to the steamer and bought three bottles of brandy from the steward." The calamitous prospect, of course, suggested and justified energetic precautions; but in this instance they were wasted. From an area of half a mile round the hotel he could have victualled, his own ship, and several others, with every alcoholic liquor known in commerce. The authorities in the hotel were tolerant of its use. In the fine evenings there was ever a festive group assembled round a table in the open air, whereon the alcoholic elements of conviviality were displayed. There seemed to be no restriction on the possession and use of alcoholic liquors, even within the premises. One might see a group occasionally at the public table disposing, at their own sweet will, of the contents of their own flask of cognac. All that the innkeeper does, apparently, for the promotion of temperance, is the negative duty of refusing to supply out of stores of his own—and even this virtue evidently deserts him in remote places. But the thirsty soul panting for alcoholic stimulants in a duly medical form has another resource. The innkeeper has all

the various classes of consumable alcohol made into mixtures or punches, and served in small bottles. Thus, he whose appetite has not been corrupted into a craving for the raw material, may have his jorum without the trouble of mixing it. There can be no doubt that here we see a decided fiscal blunder. The sinner's grog is not stopped; on the contrary, he gets it all the cheaper, in that he buys it from the shopkeeper instead of the hotel-keeper; and if the question of how much he is to consume is answered through the question how much he can afford, he increases the supply. On the other hand, the State loses the fund it might draw by taxing the publican for the privilege of supplying the liquor-consumer. But if State regulation in this shape has proved a failure, this appears to be more than balanced by the eminent success of State regulation in another stage—in the process that adapts the fruits of the earth to the putting into a man's mouth that which steals away his brain. In our estimate of the sources of drunkenness—it may be also of other vices—we have not perhaps sufficiently rated the influence of the social customs, national and party opinions and cries, and other impulses that confer approval on evil practices and convert them into virtues. A small silent influence may turn such currents of vitiating force out of their course, and do a world of good; as, for instance, among ourselves the disappearance of toasts dictated by certain political or social regulations, and the abolition of many rules requiring a certain standard of drinking capacity for certain occasions, and promulgating the necessity of training the human being to drink up to the standard.

A fluctuation in public opinion, the fashion set by other customs,—such as the cup of coffee and the

abbreviation of the sojourn in the dining-room,—will gradually and imperceptibly turn large classes of men into a new and a better course of living; while all the time the police is distracted by the frantic and utterly vain efforts to drive the confirmed dram-drinker first from the tavern, next from the gin-palace, and at last from the shebeen. As we have seen, Norway seems to have stopped short of the theories of our own zealots in a tendency towards this latter conclusion. It has attempted, without much success, to carry out prohibition in a particular shape; but there it has stopped short, without laying down and supplying a vast organization, inquisitorial and coercive, to carry out a commandment to the effect, "Thou shalt not drink."

To recur now to those changes in fashion and social conduct which, without quarrelling, or imprecation, or inquisition, or persecution, have in them the virtue of turning the ways of men out of so evil a channel as excessive drinking, I am inclined to think that the same thing may sometimes be done by judicious State intervention, and that it has been done in Norway.

From what Inglis tells us of Norway nearly fifty years ago, we must infer that for the abundant drinking of corn-brandy there was some stronger impulse than mere infectious conviviality at assemblages of people, hale, jovial, and resolute to drown dull care. There was a certain heroism, nationality, and virtue in the accomplishment of potations both long and strong. He gives us a specimen—certainly an earnest and manful specimen—of a Norse drinking-song, with the preface "Wherever corn-brandy is a favourite—and that, I believe, is everywhere—the song is a favourite. It is expressive of the generally-received opinion among the peasantry

that corn-brandy gives strength and long life.”—

“To the brim, young men, fill it up—fill again;
Drain, drain, young men—’tis to Norway you drain:
Your fathers have sown it,
Your fields they have grown it.
Then quaff it, young men, for he’ll be the strongest
Who drinks of it deepest, and sits at it longest.”

“A pretty precept, indeed, to inculcate on young gentlemen,” says respectable mamma, who has sent in the coffee, and is a little nervous because the gentlemen—her eldest boy has remained with them for the first time—have stayed a minute or two longer than is necessary. For the tone of this lyrical appeal the one stanza may suffice: the next appeals to the spirit of the old men on like grounds of good sense and nationality.

In those days it will be observed that the bonder or yeoman made his own corn-brandy, and was proud of its strength and purity. Private distillation has now for many years been prohibited in Norway, I have no means of knowing that the prohibition is effective; but I think it likely that it is, and that if there is any smuggling, it must be on so small a scale as to have no perceptible influence on the general results of the prohibition. Distillation is one of those complicated and fastidious processes which the law seems always able to suppress, unless there be a strong social influence—as there happened to be many years ago in Scotland—counteracting the law. If, as in Norway, the remoteness of many of the dwellings might render it difficult to detect private contraventions of the law, it would render still more difficult the trade of the smuggler attempting to supply the illicit produce of one farm to the others which had abandoned private distillation.

I believe Norway is now supplied with its corn-brandy—its *vin du pays*, as whiskey is ours in Scotland—from distilleries on a very large scale, and that Drontheim is the Schiedam and the Glenlivet of that region.

With no absolute prohibitions, we have here impediments physical, and even moral, to the domestic consumption of corn-brandy. It has to be brought from a distance, and if it is to be made out of the consumer’s own grain, that grain must be sent to a distance. Then as to the moral influences, there can be no spirit of competition or boast about the purity and strength of the produce of any homestead; and this impulse, along with much else that might arouse convivial ambition, vanishes, so that as a new generation arises, many of the inducements to excess disappear, without leaving any exasperating recollections of interference or oppression.

If it should be asked why an independent self-willed people should readily submit to such an intrusion on their domestic arrangements as the suppression of private distillation, the answer is at hand. It is a simple and efficient means of taxation. The northern races all look at these things with a rational balancing of difficulties and the method of overcoming them; and nothing would make a surer appeal to their sense of what is fitting, than the raising a revenue by a State organisation of the production and distribution of the national stimulant, rather than by direct taxation. Perhaps even among those who joined in the lyrical exultations on the potency of the domestic fluid, there might be some who thought in their hearts that the flow of that fluid might be beneficially restrained or narrowed, and that if this could be accomplished simultaneously with the supply of the national treasury, the general result was not to be re-

gretted. We have had lessons great and small on the same text in this country. There were, as I have noted, at one time social conditions in Scotland seriously impeding a productive excise levy on distillation; and much to the disappointment of statesmen who hoped otherwise, the duty had to be reduced so as to undersell the smuggler. It is now happily otherwise. Taking the duties on malt and spirits, with the excise licenses of dealers, we may fairly count that on home-made spirits of the poorer kind the proportion paid to the revenue is five hundred per cent on the original productive cost of the articles. To those who, in sentimental logic, think it shocking, that the revenue should be supplied from so degrading a source, has it ever occurred to reflect what our condition would be if our people could supply themselves with gin and whiskey at sixpence a bottle? Without going into the abstract doctrines of reprobation and original sin, there are, and there will be for some time to come, those who indulge in the habits that are luxuries in their moderate grades, and become sinful in excess; and it is surely pleasant to reflect that civilisation has found adjustments that not only lay heavy impediments on excess of indulgence, but provide from the indulgence, and even rising with an increase in the rate of that indulgence, a fund for the encouragement and protection of the virtuous citizen. Since there are people insane enough to maintain that this fund should be thrown away, might we not swamp their formula about the State countenancing excess in taxing it, by another of the same vague character, but more reasonable and just—that the great Ruler of all has manifestly set before the State the duty of making the luxurious and vicious enjoyments of those who indulge in them subservient to the legitimate uses of

society, and the promotion of beneficence?

But let us flee this smoky philosophy, creeping too closely into the dim orbit of the lamp, and seek the sunshine of heaven where it lights up one of the most glorious portions of our globe;—let us get back again into the scenery. I announced that I addressed myself chiefly to those who have a few weeks of holiday in hand, and wish to return without the remorseful feeling that these have been badly invested—a result that often comes, like other bad speculations, from efforts too ambitious leading to disaster. It cannot, then, be too emphatically laid down, that the traveller should not beforehand select certain objects of ambition as indispensable to his success and happiness. Norway is essentially a country not to be “done,” but to be taken in all patience and courteous assent. The separate fosses and glaciers and snowy peaks that trip after each other in the guide-books, as if they were huddled into a corner like the sights of Chamouni or the Oberland, may be scattered so far apart that it may take weeks to get from one to another; and it does not always follow that the country traversed in the long journey is of the higher cast of Norwegian scenery. Over many a Norwegian mile—and each of them is equal to seven and a half English miles—has the weary, self-persecuting sight-seer pursued his toilsome way to some glacier or foss which he finds shrouded in impenetrable mists, while less ambitious sojourners have been enjoying the delights and surprises of an ever-shifting scenery, through varieties inexhaustible. The practical realisation of this advice is very simple. Get into a process or run of the characteristic scenery; and this you can always do by taking one of the long Fiords. Follow it up leisurely and enjoyingly. “Take the good the gods

provide you; and when you are tired of it, then seek what else you have time or inclination for, in the consciousness that, should you have seen your last of this world, your eye has partaken of one of the most gorgeous assemblages of grandeur and beauty that reposes on its surface.

On the other hand, no doubt, the independent wanderer has tastes and æsthetics of his own; and if he repudiates the despotism of the guides and guide-books, he may not be inclined to leave his prospects at the disposal of blind chance. But it is just the privilege of one who finds his way to any of the great organisations of scenery, that in leisurely divergences he has choice among various types, and in his choice he will be led by his experience elsewhere. For instance, in Norway I feel little personal inclination for the snows or the glaciers. Unless one wanders into the great northern regions, where snow and ice continue till they meet the snows and ices of the other hemisphere at the north pole, these features are on a comparatively poor scale in Norway; and somehow, poor as they are, they are depreciated by their northern latitude rendering them so much less meritorious, as it were, than the achievements of central Europe. It is when wandering through the long, hot, and rather monotonous valleys of the Inn, the Salz, or the Aar, that one longs to be up at those green glaciers and vast pinnacles of snow which refresh the eye even in the distance where they are. Then the snows and glaciers of Norway, though so much farther away from the sun, are not only much poorer, but much less accessible than those of the Alps; and after long toilsome journeys over bleakish mountain scenery, it is remembered how, in the Grindelwald or the valley of Chamouni, you had indulged in so much grander a devel-

opment of that class of scenery by a mere step from the door of the hotel.

Apart from the combined glories of the general scenery of the Fiords, the strength of Norway in specific articles of scenery is in its cataracts, which are, perhaps, as much superior to those of the Alps as the works of frost and snow are inferior. Their variety is infinite,—from the roaring foss that seems to shake the mountains from their bases, to the small white thread that is seen aloft cutting its way through the face of the precipice into the pine forest below. That you should see its course, narrow as it is, so clear and white on the surface of the rock, warns you that its whiteness is the effect of excessive fury, and that it is not, on a near approach, the gentle thing it seems from far below. Up such clefts as these strings of white descend—if you can get up—there are neuks where, in the intervals between ambitious toil, you may aptly meditate, according to your turn of mind, with infinite varieties of material objects to pour their harmony and beauty into your thoughts. You may affect the lofty bank,

“Where deep, deep down and far within,
Tolls with the rock the roaring lian.”—

or you may prefer, and easily find if you prefer, the rippling stream that, swelling from a spring in the rock, and not liable to be swollen by the melting of the snows, passes on leaving all the wild flowers at its edge undisturbed, and slides over a mossy rock so gently that you would like to slide along with it, only you would be broken on the way down, and it is not. Long ago I have taken my walk of a few miles, as multitudes have in later times, to see one of this kind in the gentle Corrymulzie that finds its ways to the Dee above Braemar; but on a hillside in Fiordland you may find

a hundred Corrymulzies—and, as I have said, you may find also many specimens of that more ambitious style of waterfalling of which the Staubbach is a type.

In these flying notes of the enjoyable feature of the Fiord scenery I must not omit the sunsets. These are not popular exhibitions with the guide and guide-book fraternity, because they cannot be fixed down and converted into cash. To the cataract and glacier, even to the mountain-top, the hapless tourist may be dragged through rain and mist and darkness. But as our northern sunsets are signally beautiful, so are they capricious. They come upon us unawares, and it is best for us to take them as they come, in thankfulness. Those who have known brilliant sunsets on the Argyllshire or Ross-shire sea-lochs will be prepared for the night scene on the Fiord. To all the northern nations these sunsets are the compensation for the long dark nights and misty days that fill so large a share of time. Though we could ransack the globe for contrasts, we would probably find that nature contains not the elements of any more marvellous than those that out of her mere atmospheric apparatus of sunshine and shade, and mist and rain, she can create upon any one of our western sea-lochs. Behold it, or rather experience it, on a cold wet morning. The sea seems inky black, save where its white angry lips snarl upon the rocks. On this headland the clouds move about restlessly, seeking for an abiding place; on that other they have settled down, an impenetrable gloomy shroud; and so you stand shivering on the small slippery jetty waiting for the steamer with its damp cargo of uncomfortable, discontented humanity. But ere evening the wind is hushed, the clouds have taken wings and flown away over the wide heavens. The sun is

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just descending behind the headland that was shrouded, and its shape is revealed in purple enamel set on a bed of gold, that seems to steep every object in its divine splendour. Well, we must not admit the Norse sunset to be essentially more beautiful, but it is of far longer abiding, and it covers a far wider canvas. The lover of our sunsets can imagine what it is to have the scene for several hours, and to watch its splendours passing over a hundred miles of Fiord, with its many little creeks branching from right to left, and the enfolding of its countless mountain openings. Such gorgeousness as some of these sunsets cast around would tire the senses if they were more frequent than they are, and we become more than content to vary them with more colourless harmonies of sea and sky. And old Ocean can be no less gentle and benign within the rocky prongs of the Fiord than in the Mediterranean bay where the inspired boy sang,—

“The sun is warm, the sky is clear,
The waves are dancing fast and bright,
Blue isles and snowy mountains wear
The purple noon's transparent light,
The breath of the moist air is light.

I see the deep's untrampled shore,
With green and purple sea-weeds strown:
I see the waves upon the shore,
Like light dissolved in star-showers
thrown.”

It is necessary to stop here, because the next line takes up the position of sitting upon the sands. If the sea throws up any of that article on the shores of Norway, I never had the good luck to see a specimen of it. I am prevented also from quoting some pretty lines out of Campbell's poem on the sea as visible from St. Leonards, because the shingly beach is a property in it.

However, such in short are the visions that come “unmasked, unsought,” to the rambler in the far

stretches of the Fiords, who, unambitious of special achievements, is content to enjoy such luxuries of the eye as he knows to be affluently scattered around him. If you are tired of one long inlet, or your curiosity is awakened by another, pass on to it, and feel, like the youth, light-hearted and content—

"Here, Arab-lila, is pitched my tent,
And straight again is furled."

And now, before we part company, let us just look in on one of those recesses in the mountains, so abounding in beauty and grandeur. Let us take Laerdalsoeren. There are associations from incidental causes that may bring the memory back to one spot more readily than another, of the same external character and so it happened here. In the first place, lone and distant from home as it was, I found at the same board, as if he had dropped from the clouds, the son of an old friend, whose wit and pathos have made people laugh and weep. Here we were, with no others in the small inn; and as he was, like Harry Vane, "young in years, but in sage-council old," I got from him some good advice, in aid of my own small experience in Norse travelling. Further, it happened that here I had parted with three friends picked up on the road. It is odd that many of us who are apt to keep neighbours and people long known at the staff's end, will yet make rapid acquaintance with strangers on the road, and keep up the intimacy so improvised into after-days. There is a reason for this. Nothing tries a man's temper and character so rapidly and sharply as the exigencies of travel. All the base and dastardly elements come to the surface in a scum at once. On the other hand, if a man has aught of the chivalrous, the relying, and the unselfish in him, it manifests itself in such shape that its integrity is

not to be questioned. Suffice it that the three strangers, North of England men, had become "friends" with me; and when we shook hands to part in opposite directions, there came the reflection that always and inevitably arises out of such occasions—shall we ever meet again? Often have I wished that again I might cross the path of some stranger who has for a time peopled the desert for me in wanderings long, long ago, and when such an event does occur, it is one of the pleasantest of reunions.

Laerdalsoeren will be found, but only in a large and minute map, at the end of one of the eastmost stretches of the Sogné Fiord. Soeren, I believe, is old Norse for a village; but this village of Laerdal has a shadowy figure in ancient history, as the capital of the great district of the Sogné Fjeld and Fiord. In this district is the theatre of the great modern Scandinavian Epic—the Frithiof's Saga of Bishop Tegner. We know that the Sogné sent forth a large proportion of the Vikings or sea-robbers of the earliest days, and among them the terrible leader, Ketil Flatnef or Flat-nosed. It is not difficult to imagine the strange collection of houses in its capital as scarcely changed from what they were a thousand years ago, when they were the abode of these rovers—so far as they had an abode outside their ships, which were alike the mansions of the captains and the palace of the king. Raised on the great boulder foundations already referred to, each beam of timber would be removed as it wasted away. These houses—we cannot speak of streets—run in strings along the edge of the sea, where room exists or can be made for them, and up through the crevices of the rocks, in like manner, where room is found or can be made. There is nothing there now that bears upon its face actual evidence of remote

antiquity, but it appears that, until very lately, there was such a testimony. It is a common remark that Norway is peculiarly destitute of that earliest type of Gothic architecture which takes the very name of Norman. In military or castellated architecture of all kinds the country is poor, because there was no room for it, and the fighting people lived in the water. Yet the Slot (Schloss it would be in Germany) at Bergen is a very fine specimen of the Norman keep. But of Norman ecclesiastical architecture there are some extremely interesting types. In the first place, there are of stone the two grand cathedral churches, Trondheim and Stavanger, with a few of smaller size. But minute observers have of late brought under critical notice small churches of timber in remote places, bearing marks of great age. Whether it be that the original wooden structure has lasted for nearly eight hundred years, or that each plank and panel has been replaced with facsimiles of all its original carvings when it decayed, certain it is that the types of the earliest Norman school are seen in these remote fanes. Such a church, it appears, existed in Laerdalsoeren, and was recently removed to Silesia, where the guide-books say it now stands. This is truly an odd-looking transaction, though, from the scarcity of old religious edifices in the northern territories of Prussia, one can imagine an avaricious desire in these regions to get possession of light movable articles of the kind. In the great museum of Copenhagen, indeed, there is a fine broad mass of carved timber, ticketed in unmistakable words, "Kirk door fra Island." It was procured by a transaction satisfactory to the community who parted with it. This door was doubtless removed to Iceland by one of the groups that migrated from Norway seeking refuge from strong

paternal governments. It is a work of a high art in its own kind, which could not have flourished in a country destitute of timber. A cast of it may be seen in the South Kensington Museum, along with casts of the doorway of a church at Flaa, demolished in 1835. Both will interest any observer who has not seen such work in its own home, from the strange profusion of restless energy that seems to intertwine itself in snake-knots and other like devices on the surface of the timber.

This community that has been shunted off from the world into decay and obscurity ever since the last of the navies that carried terror over the world rotted against its shores, has just recently put in a great stake in the new civilisation of the day. It has a telegraphic station. "Epistolary correspondence," as the school-books used to say, is here an affair of weeks, but now you get an answer to inquiries about home in four hours. Here are new conditions in the telegraphic system. Generally it has trodden on the heels of other means of communication that have been growing more and more rapid. There are likely to be curious results where one part of the transaction of business—the literary part, as we may call it, the bargaining, the announcement of arrivals and departures, and the like—is so rapid in transit, while the solid part—such as the conveyance of the goods themselves, and the payments connected with the transactions—is so protracted. Already one feels at these almost unnatural telegraphic stations how the post-carriage of letters is as it were tripped up. You get a telegram that there is somewhere in Scandinavia a letter from Britain on its way to you at your last address—say at Laerdalsoeren—but it will not reach you earlier than a week, perhaps a fortnight, after the announcement.

If this cleft, so closely and steeply

walled in by rocks, were in the Alps, it would be infested by goitrous and cretinous creatures of loathsome aspect; but here we have a strong-built healthy people. One regrets that they have not more to do; and it is easy to understand how they must ever have longed for the open sea, as they see it washing the feet of the great rocks, and feel that it is the only outlet to a world beyond their narrow abode, unless it be the highway on the other side, stretching with its hundreds of miles of beaten road on to Christiania. Let us try what fortune a ramble along that road may bring, after having made vain efforts to escape into a wider horizon by scrambling up clefts or corries in the rock. After a few miles there is a perceptible track up a glen, lined so far with the usual wooden houses, but at last piercing into the forest. Here, with the roaring torrent below, the pine-trees, the rocks on either side, and an expanse of snow far up in front, there is as much of the wild spirit of solitude as any heart could wish. It comes up, among the meditations suggested in such a spot, how the guide-books recommend this district as a suitable post for the hunting of the bear—and there, sure enough, is an animal stirring the lower branches of the trees. Well, it is a pig. He, too, has been wandering up the glen in search of something—not scenery—and the odour of some soup boiling over a spirit-lamp has brought him near his fellow-wanderer. He is not an amorphous lump of tallow, like our English high-breds, but lanky, with long dark bristles, like the boars in Schneider's pictures. Yet from size and habit he ranks in the class of pachydermatous animals only as pig, and his abode is not a den but a sty. Had there been much chance of the larger visitor, this one's presence might have been

an assurance, since Bruin, if he have the nice discrimination in butcher-meat attributed to him, would certainly have preferred the quadruped to the biped.

I suspect English visitors here imbibe many preposterous notions about sport. Fishing, no doubt, can be obtained to any amount, and of almost any kind, by those who set their heart on it, and take time to go to the spots where it is to be found, which are not always those endowed with the finest scenery; but all that one hears of the chances for the hunter and the stalker is apt to assume a legendary character. The inevitable Cockney is of course present, fitted out as if he had gone to take possession of a newly-hired preserve. I met one of these beside an upper feeder of the Hardanger. He was prepared for anything that might turn up—bear, wolf, boar, reindeer, capercailzie, or ptarmigan. He permitted himself to be seduced for some days into regions still more remote from "the luxuries of the Saut Market" than that where I found him. He complained that he had not been successful, and admitted, on cross-questioning, that he had got sight or trace of no living thing save his conductors. I suspected that people had been playing tricks on his intellect touching the merits of my geological hammer, for he came forward at once to meet me with an inquiring interested face, and, "Well, sir, have you had any success?" He was a very pure specimen of Cockney breed, except that he had not that assumption of superiority generally claimed by those who also assume the privilege of inverting the aspirates. The more academic class of his fellow-tourists had bestowed on him the name of "The Arditer," on account of his efforts to make it known that his rifle was "a hard hitter."

CHARLES JAMES LEVER.

If literary genius does in some instances fail to receive its due acknowledgment, and — notwithstanding all that has been said and sung to the contrary—we believe the instances to be very few and far between ; on the other hand (as if to adjust the balance), it occasionally meets—we do not say with more than its deserts, but with something over and above, and differing in form from the recognition which usually waits upon intellectual achievements. We allude to a feeling which certain specialties in the works of certain men of genius evoke from their readers on their behalf, which combines interest in the producer with admiration for the talent of his production, and ends by conciliating for such an author something like the personal friendship of his generation. We have not far to look for illustrations of our meaning, nor is it necessary to multiply examples. Two, which at once suggest themselves—both within the limits of our own literature and of the present age—will suffice ; for, when we have mentioned Sir Walter Scott and Charles Dickens, we have said enough to explain our proposition, and to justify it. But it is only in a partial degree that this sentiment—as rare as it is honourable to him who elicits it—can be expressed during the lifetime of its object. Hatred and envy may be silent beside the grave, but love proclaims itself most loudly in the voice of lamentation ; and so death, which often supplies the measure and touchstone of affection and friendship, is also the fullest exponent of the sentiment in question. We scarcely required this melancholy test to enable us to place in the same category with Scott and

Dickens (as a participator in this distinction), the eminent man whose name stands at the head of this article ; but the test is unfortunately in our possession ; and, not only in this country, but all over the world where the English language is read, the warmth of feeling evoked by the death of Charles Lever, shows us that the sentiment in his case differed from that in the cases of his illustrious predecessors neither in kind nor in degree, but only by the more limited range of its manifestation. Differing with different authors, in this instance the awakening influence was no doubt the vivid impress, which is apparent on everything Lever wrote, of his own individuality—an individuality which, in addition to many other notable characteristics, was stamped by a humanity, a width of sympathy, and a genial manliness, which could never fail to commend themselves to all sorts and conditions of men. Just as it may often be observed in a large, mixed company, that the presence of one genial and sympathetic spirit leavens an unpromising lump of incongruities, harmonises conflicting elements, and, by some indefinable influence, secures the happiness of the whole,—so is Lever's individuality visible in all his works, and such is the charm he exercises over his readers.

Men who combine genius with geniality are the veritable salt of the earth, and the age which profits chiefly by their "savour" does well to honour them in life, and, when they are gone, to remember them with gratitude and affection.

And so we—especially of the generation now in middle life, for whose earliest boyhood he first

opened the stores of his genius—so we lament him in a double sense, recognising in his death not only the extinction of a light which the age can ill afford to dispense with, but also the loss of a dear old friend whose name is interwoven with the happiness of the generation's early youth, to which happiness he himself so largely contributed.

The general outline of Charles Lever's life has been already communicated to the public by the daily press : we need not reproduce it here ; nor have we at present in our possession the means of filling in and extending the sketch with anything like accuracy. We trust, however, that at some future time his life and letters may form the subject of a separate book ; and we can safely say that the materials for a most interesting and instructive work will not be wanting, if his correspondence has been as voluminous, as its quality, judged by the specimens with which we are familiar, is admirable.

As fertility of conception is an essential element of genius, so abundance of production seems to be almost as essentially one of its attributes. For, independent of the spontaneous tendency of exuberance to seek an issue, the relation between supply and demand in all that concerns the products of human labor, skill, and intelligence, is so nicely adjusted, and the public taste (with occasional aberrations) is so constantly directed to that which in its kind is best, that we may predicate of genius that where it is highest there it will also be most productive. Impulse from within and external encouragement combine to produce this result—to make productiveness the sign of genius, and even, in some degree, the measure of it.

All general rules are, of course, subject to considerable exceptions ;

but we think that as the number of brilliant single-speech and single-book men is infinitesimal, so, although the world is deluged with trashy literature, only in very rare instances does one single fountain of folly and dulness contribute largely to the dismal flood. Of course such a test could only be employed as subordinate to many others more important ; but in forming an estimate of the genius of Charles Lever, and in looking about for tests, we are struck, *in limine*, with the bulk of his productions.

In thirty years he produced as many novels ; nor was the issue irregular or spasmodic ; but, year by year, with something like the precise recurrence of the harvest, his works (often in themselves of unusual length) were continuously given to the world. In this respect he has not fallen short of many writers in the whole range of European literature ; and it must not be forgotten that fiction was by no means the only field of his exertions, and that his miscellaneous and political contributions to the press were considerable in number, and important from their intrinsic value. His works, as we have said, were not produced spasmodically. His labour was pretty equally distributed over the whole of his literary life ; and hence, no doubt, it is that in his writings we detect no symptom of strain or effort, but everywhere the charming impress of spontaneity.

In speaking of productiveness as the measure of genius to a certain extent, we must emphasise the limitation ; for, as any force diverted into many channels will be weaker at any given point than at the point of departure, so will the genius of a voluminous man, if tested by any one of his performances, appear inferior to what it really is. We cannot hope to find an epitome of

all such a man's excellences in one work, and it is only by a broad analysis of the whole, that a true appreciation of his power and merit can be arrived at. In few instances more than in Charles Lever's is such a process necessary, for not only was he a most voluminous writer, he was also and essentially a versatile and many-sided man. In perusing his works we are constantly struck as much with the diversity as with the number of his brilliant gifts, and as, here and there, one appears incongruous with the rest, we therein detect the cause of certain anomalous blemishes in his performances.

In this way we have often found ourselves exclaiming, "How he would have shone in this sphere or in that!" "What scope this or that profession would have afforded for this or that talent!" "In such or such a situation this or that intellectual flaw would have been immaterial and unobserved!" And, as a matter of fact, our analysis has led us to a conclusion which we did not anticipate, and which may likely enough appear paradoxical to many, which is, that the career of the novelist, or even of literature in general, was probably not the one best calculated to concentrate his many great faculties, so that the fullest force of the largest number of them should be felt and evidenced in the general result of his career. Fully recognising his brilliancy and power as a writer, and heartily assenting to the reputation and the no doubt lasting fame which he has attained to in that sphere, this is the result of our analysis. Many will disagree with us, and many who agree with us in the general proposition would differ with us and among themselves as to the sphere which might better have lent itself to the development of his powers, and where he might have achieved

an even greater success. We are, however, rather anticipating the result of our discussion.

Some of Lever's best characteristics are scattered so profusely over everything he wrote, that he who runs may read them. Such are his powers of description, with few exceptions, equally vivid whatever be his subject, and which form one of many evidences that he possessed the faculties of observation and memory in a degree scarcely second to Sir Walter Scott. Abounding with incident as his novels do—with action the most varied, with scenery that is perpetually shifting, and with actors that are as numerous as their characteristics are diverse—his descriptive powers are continually in requisition. It may be remarked that, in depicting scenery, if a landscape pure and simple is his subject, his effects are sometimes a little marred by prolixity and over-elaboration; but the moment he brings human nature into contact with external nature, the moment that relations of sympathy or contrast between the aspects of the latter and the inner emotions of the former are suggested to him, he escapes from his overloaded manner, and is himself again. The fact is that human nature was at once his special field and his peculiar inspiration; and he required the Promethean spark of a human presence in his compositions to give them complete vitality.

Wherever action is most energetic, there his descriptions are most successful. Hence it is that war is a theme in which his art never fails him. He has dealt exhaustively with it; and there is not a phase of the subject which he has not treated with almost equal power. How many pictures has he given us of the grand crash and onset of two hostile armies! The whole drama is placed before us. We see the

great battle-waves roll together amid the thunder of artillery, the clash of steel, the shouting of men, the tramp of horses. We feel the shock of the deadly impact, we see the recoil and the renewal of the onset. Through the deep, dark clouds of smoke and dust, we catch fitful glimpses of heroic episodes; they are revealed to us for one instant by a sudden sunburst or the flames of cannon, and immediately lost again in the universal hurly-burly. We can mark all the intermissions, the relapses, and the rallies which characterise an actual battle. Then we have the grand final movement—the supreme concentration of energy, the victory, the pursuit; and at last, when all is over, he brings us back across the sombre field where the dead are lying beneath the cold and starless night. Lever's early novels, which chronicle most of Napoleon's great battles, are rich in such descriptions, drawn with a spirit that we think has been scarcely surpassed, and with a verisimilitude that is no less remarkable. To a non-professional reader they would, of course, suggest long and varied personal experience of such senses; and even the soldier, as he reads them, recalls with astonishment that they have been "evolved from the inner consciousness" of a civilian.

But in addition to these grand battle-pieces, which are drawn with historical accuracy in the main, we have multitudes of minor episodes—night attacks, with their stealthy preparations and sudden terrific *dénoûments*, sorties, forlorn-hopes, reconnaissances, ambuscades, surprises, every sort of development of war, seen from every point of view. Sometimes we are with the victor, sometimes with the defeated; now in pursuit and now in retreat; sometimes in the ranks, as in Erckmann-Chatrian's novels, sharing the

hopes, and fears, and sufferings, and aspirations of the humble unit; sometimes with the great strategist himself, as he stands aloof watching the course of the action, and coldly ordaining each new move on the bloody chess-board.

These descriptions, picturesque though they be, strike one as drawn rather with a military than an artistic intention. The author wishes us to attend to each point of his narrative, rather that we may come understandingly with him to the crisis, than that we should pause to contemplate the effects of grouping, light, shade, colour, and so forth, which he incidentally, as it were, suggests. He is picturesque and eloquent, in fact, without any special design to display his powers in these respects. So at least it strikes us. And thus he does not in the least depend for his effects upon word-painting; he is too much in earnest, too much engrossed with his subject, too much hurried away with the rapid movement of the action, to indulge in the epicurism which weighs a word and fastidiously selects a phrase. He tells his tale in a style and language that are vigorous and appropriate, though occasionally here, as elsewhere, he is too redundant and wordy. Lever excels, too, in all sorts of scenes, not actually of war, but of military pageantry; among many others, we specially remember his account of the triumphal entry of the French army into Berlin in 'Tom Burke;' of the aspect of Paris during the occupation by the Allied armies in 'Jack Hinton;' and a singularly fine panorama on the coast of France, where, on the sea we behold a flotilla of a thousand sail, and on shore what was called "The army of England," rehearsing an embarkation, in view of the threatened invasion of *perfidious Albion*.

Passing from war to peace, if we here find that his descriptions are not given with quite the same energy and gusto, they are but little inferior in truth and vividness. He has given himself a wide field. He ranges freely from tragedy to comedy, from the sublime to the ridiculous, from high to low life—from the throne indeed to the cellar—and, all up and down the intermediate social gradations, wherever men are assembled together, whether in masses or in twos and threes, at home or abroad, he is equally ready to be their artist, and to blend them together in every sort of combination, harmonious or the reverse.

Trying to recall a few of these descriptive performances, we are immediately overwhelmed by a multitude of recollections, yet not more numerous than they are heterogeneous, and, in the embarrassing richness of the collection, we can make no choice. Here they are pell-mell; state banquets, mess orgies, steeplechases, coronations, duels, executions, faction-fights, Parliamentary debates, nights at Frascati's, days at Donnybrook, trials by the Chief Justice, trials by Judge Lynch, conclaves of the Camorra, White-boy committees, receptions in the Faubourg, balls in Belgravia, penny-weddings in Connamara, "pow-wows" with the Manhattans, plunderings in the Cursaal, "plants" at Crockford's, murders, marriages, suicides, elopements, elections, wakes—we pause for lack of breath. He has made more than one study from each of these and a thousand other subjects. Give him but permission to introduce human figures into his canvas, and, no matter what the theme, he will make you nearly always a successful picture, from a battle-piece in the manner of David or Horace Vernet, down to a domestic interior after Gerard Dow or Jan Steen.

We must, however, make one partial exception to this comprehensively favourable view of Lever's descriptive powers, and of the uses to which he has applied them, and it is this,—that in those descriptive sketches where he might have been, and where he has obviously often tried hard to be, *pathetic*, he has rarely succeeded beyond a very moderate degree. We would have supposed that out of such a vast range and variety of subjects, many more would have suggested themselves as in harmony with the pathetic vein, and that where the employment of the pathetic vein was inevitable, Lever's peculiar gifts would have enabled him to make a better figure with it than he has done. But the truth is that nowhere—neither where he is descriptive, nor where he is didactic, nor where he is dramatic—does he show himself to be the master of a very deep or tender pathos. He can be tragic and comic, grave, solemn, and sentimental; he can do almost anything else with his readers, but he cannot command their tears, or even more than slightly stir the fountain whence tears issue. His fault is, however, rather negative than positive, for in his failures he does not become, as Dickens does, offensively maudlin and hysterical; he is simply wordy and turgid; feeling his unsuccess, he tries to conquer it by elaboration and redundancy. We confess that this defect appears to us to be an anomalous one in an intellectual and moral organisation such as Lever possessed; and though, of course, it is only given to the very few, however versatile, to achieve universality, we could wish that the inevitable flaw had taken some other shape. Without going the length of Lamartine's dictum—"Le pathétique seul est infaillible dans l'art—celui qui sait attendre sait tout,"—we know

that the highest position in art will never be conceded to any artist who is not master of this instrument. No doubt in a considerable measure this defect may be attributed to Lever's comparative failures in love scenes, where pathos is so often indispensable; but we shall revert to this later on. Another of his most remarkable gifts is his extraordinarily keen perception of analogies, which, aided by his memory, enables him at will to illuminate his pages with a blaze of illustration. It indeed not unfrequently tends to mar the symmetry of his novels, by turning him aside from the highway of his narrative to indulge in humorous variations of an idea, or in lengthy digressions in the shape of anecdote. This gift, which he somewhat abused in his earlier and more famous novels, was under better control in his later productions, and he has used it to perfection in his celebrated "O'Dowd" papers, where his illustrations, if they are numerous, are always strikingly apt, and the various shiftings of his points of view felicitous and effective in the highest degree. The gift was indeed singularly adapted to the latter class of compositions, as well as to the adornment of the conversational powers which Lever possessed so eminently; and in making him keen to detect between incongruous persons, objects, and ideas, the bond of a common, and more or less remote, relation to something else, constituted one of the elements of his wit. With regard to that faculty, we think it may be said that he possessed, in a rare degree, most of the intellectual machinery which enables a man to collect mirthful and humorous impressions, and to combine them effectively in a multitude of variations, and with a hundred gradations of relief,—now stimulating universal laughter—laughter

that holds both its sides—by the broadest humour,—now affecting us with a delight which is equal, if it is subtler and quieter, by the fineness of his wit.

It would have been impossible for a man of Lever's logical intellect, wit, humour, and clearness of moral and social perceptions, to be without satire, and some of his happiest efforts flow from this vein. But he was satirical without being a satirist; that is, satire was with him not a specialty, but an instrument incidentally employed as chance occasion offered. He did not set up for a moral teacher, as a satirist proper should do; he did not make painful explorations into the darker recesses of human nature to discover targets for poisoned arrows; he seldom employed his satire against the graver moral delinquencies—with which he had a more immediate method of dealing—nor did he often use it directly for the establishment of a truth. His utterances in this form were not like those of Swift—fierce summings-up of misanthropical reflections; nor like Thackeray's—unflinching verifications of his diagnoses by minute anatomical demonstration. His satire deals with the *γελιον* of Aristotle—with the ridiculous rather than the depraved—with those minor faults which are not pernicious but unbeseeing, and of which the fit punishment is laughter rather than reproach. So he contented himself with snap-shots at the follies and foibles of humanity as they flew past him, accompanying each shot with a peal of frank laughter, in which there was no bitterness nor any kind of malignity. Nothing, indeed, could be less cruel than his raillery; and if he was angry, it was the quick and quickly-appeased anger of an amiable man.

The absurdities of the immortal 'Dodd Family;' the preposterous follies and pretentiousness of Ma-

dame de Roni née Cassidy; the mock ceremonials of the viceregal court in the olden times; the Continental Anglo-maniac with his travesty of English sport and sportsmanship,—such and suchlike were the themes which suited him best when in this humour. But he always preserved some kind of pity and feeling for his victims, although he would have done anything rather than convert them from the error of their ways, anything rather than deprive himself and the world of such glorious food for mirth. Even in his political essays, where his satire is used with more “intention,” and often even with considerable keenness, he is guarded by his unfailing geniality from becoming venomous.

The greatest of all Lever's gifts was, however, his remarkable insight into human character, with the cognate power of analysing motives which enabled him to forecast events in real life, and to attribute to his characters in fiction consistent and appropriate action. In describing this as his greatest gift, we are probably not expressing a popular opinion. Thousands of his readers read him merely for his *fun*—simply that they may laugh—and pay little attention to any other characteristic. But in this they make the same sort of mistake which people commit who, in drinking champagne, value it only for its sparkle and effervescence, and are blinded by this accident of the wine, to the merit of its essential quality.

This power enabled him not merely to appreciate living characters with accuracy, and to sketch them with the hand of a master, but, by a more difficult synthetical process—by gathering together the actions of a man's life as detailed in history, by tracing his influence on collateral characters and events, and by grasping the general results of his career

—to arrive at the man himself, and place him before us in unmistakable reality. Nothing can be better among his delineations of historical characters than that of the great Napoleon. The grandeur of his intellectual qualities, and his magical ascendancy over his fellow-mortals, though they had obviously captivated Lever's enthusiasm, could not blind him to the antithesis presented by his moral character; and so we have the great Emperor in all his greatness, and in all his littleness, set before us in a series of studies, from the fidelity of which the licence of the novelist has but slightly detracted. Incidentally in his novels and essays we have many valuations of contemporary personages;—such men, for instance, as Cavour, Bismark, Garibaldi, Louis Napoleon, and others who have been making the history of the last quarter of a century. The wisdom of his judgments in many of these cases has been amply borne witness to by the political action of the men themselves subsequent to Lever's deliverances; and, by way of example, we may quote one of his many criticisms of the ex-Emperor of the French. Writing in 1864, at a time when Louis Napoleon, if not actually at the pinnacle of his fortunes, was still regarded as the foremost man in Europe, and pointed to as a master of statecraft and political sagacity, he says:—

“Now we are in the daily habit of hearing the most fulsome praises of this great Prince; and so successful is success, that even the journals which once took a juster measure of his capacity, are now, simply by force of the fact that he sleeps nightly at the Tuilleries, disposed to accord him all the precedence of a statesman, and all the skill of a great general. I declare I have an ardent desire always to agree with the people around me. I am never so well pleased as when I can

concur with the prevailing opinion; and I am not sure that I would not rather put a little mild coercion on my conscience than dissent from the judgments of the company. But here I own I cannot;

this I resist to the death. Nothing shall persuade me that the Emperor of the French is other than a third-rate man, who might possibly have distinguished himself as a police functionary or a solicitor, but has as much claim to high statecraft as Jem Mace to be an authority on the Pentateuch."

And this estimate of our fallen ally no doubt intensified what was one of his strongest political convictions,—viz., that our alliance with France was a mistake in British diplomacy of the gravest description—one which would inevitably land us, as it has done, in a false and isolated position, with a deplorable loss of reputation and prestige.

As an example of his critical estimate of character delivered in another key, we may mention his appreciative paper on Garibaldi, which forms one of his "O'Dowd" series, and the eloquent peroration of which we now quote.

"It was not amidst the orderly, the soberly trained, and well to do, that he could seek for his followers. And what praise is too great for him who could so inspire this mass, heaving with passion as it was, with his own noble sentiments, and make them feel that the work before them—a nation's regeneration—was a task too high and too holy to be accomplished by unclean hands? Can any eulogy exaggerate the services of a man who could so magnetise his fellow-men as to associate them at once with his nobility of soul, and elevate them to a standard little short of his own? That he *did* do this we have proof. Pillage was almost unknown amongst the Garibaldians; and those famished, ill-clad, shoeless men marched on from battle to battle, with scarcely an instance of crime that called for the interference of military law. Where is the general who could boast of doing as much? Where is the

leader who could be bold enough to give such a pledge for his followers? Is there an army in Europe—in the world—for whom as much could be said? All honour, therefore, to the man—not whose example only but whose very contact suggests high intent and noble action! All honour to him who brings to a great cause, not alone the dazzling splendour of heroism, but the more enduring brightness of a pure and unsullied integrity!"

He formed a very moderate estimate of Garibaldi's intellectual power—"Cavour," he says, "died, and then came Aspromonte;" but he maintains that his simplicity, trustfulness, and implicit reliance on the goodness of his cause as a reason for its success, were qualities which no mere mental superiority could replace in popular estimation.

These are valuations of character delivered with something of the gravity befitting his quality of essayist; and we think our readers will pardon us if we add a suggestive sketch in another style taken from one of his novels, and which in a few light touches places Lord Palmerston before us.

Tony Butler—the hero of the story of that name—a young Irish gentleman of no fortune and few abilities, but with a manly and independent spirit often too impetuously displayed, after innumerable fruitless visits to the Foreign Office (from which department he has received the shadowy promise of an appointment), becomes impatient and irritable, and in this mood rebukes some impertinence of the surly hall-porter with considerable violence, and even goes the length of promising to kick him.

Willis, the porter, is a personage of dignity as well as of a bad temper; he sends for a policeman, and, pending his arrival, goes up-stairs and reports Mr. Butler to the "Heads of Departments." "The Heads" send for the delinquent

and a jobation of the most terrific description is being administered to him by a certain Mr. Baynes, when—

"My Lord!" said a messenger, in a voice of almost tremulous terror, while he flung open both inner and outer door for the great man's approach. The person who entered with a quick, active step, was an elderly man, white-whiskered and white-haired, but his figure well set up, and his hat rakishly placed a very little on one side; his features were acute and betokened promptitude and decision, blended with a sort of jocular humour about the mouth, as though even State affairs did not entirely indispose a man to jest.

"Don't send the bag off to-night, Baynes, till I come down," he said, hurriedly; "and if any telegrams arrive, send them over to the House. What's the policeman doing at the door? who is refractory?"

"This—young man,"—he paused, for he had almost said 'gentleman'—'has just threatened an old and respectable servant of the Office with a personal chastisement, my Lord.'

"Declared he'd break every bone in his body," chimed in Brand.

"Whose body?" asked his Lordship.

"Willis's, my Lord—the hall porter—a man, if I mistake not, appointed by your Lordship."

"I said I'd kick him," said Tony, calmly.

"Kick Willis?" said my Lord, with a forced gravity which could not, however, suppress a laughing twinkle of his keen grey eyes.—"Kick Willis?"

"Yes, my Lord; he does not attempt to deny it."

"What's your name, sir?" asked my Lord.

"Butler," was the brief reply.

"The son of—no, not the son—but a relative of Sir Omerod's?" asked his Lordship again.

"His nephew."

"Why, Sir Harry Elphinstone has asked me for something for you. I don't see what I can do for you. It would be an admirable thing to have some one to kick the porters; but we haven't thought of such an appointment—eh, Baynes? Willis, the very first, a most impudent dog. We want

a messenger for Bucharest, Brand, don't we?"

"No, my Lord, you filled it this morning—gave it to Mr. Beed."

"Cancel Beed then, and appoint Butler."

"Mr. Beed has gone," my Lord—started with the Vienna bag."

"Make Butler supernumerary."

"There are four already, my Lord."

"I don't care if there were forty, Mr. Brand! Go and pass your examination, young gentleman, and thank Sir Harry Elphinstone, for this nomination is at his request. I am only sorry you did not kick Willis;" and with this parting speech he turned away, and hopped down stairs to his brougham with the light step and jaunty air of a man of thirty."

This clearness of insight, which Lever exercised with such skill on the units of mankind, stood him in equally good stead when he had to deal with men in their aggregates.

His appreciation of the characteristics of a nation was as fine as his perception of the qualities of an individual.

Scattered all over his works we have a cosmopolitan's view of the leading nationalities of Europe, and of the subtle growth of changes wrought, or likely to be wrought, in the inner and outer life of this or that people, by the current of political events at home and abroad; by the formation or rupture of such or such alliances; by the influence of such or such a master-mind; by the prevalence of this philosophy, or the antagonism aroused by that new dogma.

To a novelist, of course, such a faculty could not but be invaluable; yet it is equally certain that there is no career in public life where the possession of it in an equal degree would not have secured the highest distinction for him who exercised it skilfully; and, indeed, in politics, in diplomacy, and at the Bar, we see more obvious fields for its exercise, with benefit to the age, and to

the personal advantage of the man himself.

But far be it from us to underrate the value of the novel or the social essay; and no one can say that, in the sphere Lever chose for the employment of this his greatest gift, it has not been employed with admirable results; and it is in this application that we have to do with it now. As the exuberance of his inventive faculties has made his works numerous, so this faculty of insight has enabled him to cover each canvas not only with a multitude of figures, so as to convey a strong general impression of life and action, but with *dramatis personæ* of very various types, and, even where sharing the same type, preserving, by artistically-expressed *nuances*, their distinct identities. A fault which we not uncommonly see in inferior artists is, that they have but one individual for each type, and that individual too intensely typical—so that under fifty names we recognise the same man; their “gentleman” is always the same gentleman, and too exclusively gentleman-like; their blackguard the same blackguard, whose villany is far too much insisted upon; they cannot sufficiently subordinate the type to the individual, and so they become monotonous. But the higher artist, by apt dispositions of light, shade, and colour, by a variation of his accidents, by a suppression here, a projection or suggestion there, contrives, without losing his central idea, to develop it in a hundred different ways, each conveying the effect of a new creation. Here Lever shone conspicuously. We are aware that he has been accused of repeating his characters, and we are far from saying that the charge has no foundation; but we do say that for a man who wrote so much and drew so many characters, it is wonderful how

seldom he repeats himself; still more wonderful when we remark how many different developments he gave to many of his types; and more wonderful still, when we consider that his characters are so often exhibited and tested by similar incidents and experiences—in which latter respect he is more justly open to the charge of reiteration. Let us take, for example, his Irish characters; their name is legion; and here, of course, he was at a special advantage. How many delineations has he given us of the Irish gentleman *par excellence*—the Irish gentleman of the period which just preceded the Union—who was “formed” in what were called “the great days” of Ireland—when close intercourse with France lent a tone of refinement and polish to the manners of the higher classes, without in any way detracting from what was really valuable in the national characteristics! How many distinct individuals of this graceful type has he shown to us! He constantly surrounds them with the same kind of surroundings; similar vicissitudes of fortune overtake them; even the minor incidents affecting their careers are often identical, and yet never is one merely the *réchauffé* of an antecedent delineation. “The Knight of Gwynne” is his archetype in this class—perhaps the most finished and lovable of all Lever’s characters; but we have the peculiar and essential qualities of this *kind* of Irish gentleman as well portrayed in seven or eight distinct individualities.

He introduces us to the “Squireen” a hundred times, but we make a large percentage of new acquaintances. We have a score of comic Irish servants—from Mickey Free to Corny Delany—all representative men—all standing in the same quaint, and exclusively Irish, rela-

tion to their masters, yet seldom trenching upon each other's identity. We have Irish *farceurs* "in store, galore"—they were characters after Lever's heart,—whose life is mainly devoted to practical joking, whom neither law nor gospel, neither the Bailiff nor the Bishop, will balk of their fun, and whose motto seems to be, "Il faut rire avant d'être heureux de peur de mourir avant avoir ri;" but Bob Mahon is as different from Phil O'Grady as Tom O'Flaherty is from the other two; and although they are all military, heavily-indebted, dun-defying, kind-hearted, duelling Irishmen, with a pistol in one pocket and an unnegotiable acceptance in the other, their fun and their devilry are worn with a "difference" so great that each is a new creation.

And then his priests. We have them in endless variety, from the finished product of Douai and St. Omer to the copper coinage from the Maynooth mint; from the polished intriguer to the electioneering bully; from the ascetic to the *bon-vivant*; yet, through all variations, preserving the distinctive features of their order—of the national priesthood. He generally represents them, by the by, in an amiable light, which, in an Irish Protestant, is worthy of remark; unless, indeed, the rigid Catholic might think he detected the hand of an enemy in the frequency with which he finds his director the life of the company in a spirituous, rather than a spiritual sense. In that capacity, indeed, he is a great favorite of Lever's. There are few better fellows, for instance, than Father Tom Loftus, though, like

"Father Magan,
He's an illigant man,
But a bit of a rogue, a bit of a rogue;" ;

and though he is capable of sum-

ming up an optimist review of the Seven Ages with the rather unclerical sentiment—

"Sure there's nought like a jolly old age,
And the patriarchs knew this, it said is;
For though they looked sober and sage,
Faith, they had their own fun with the ladies;"

yet, on fitting occasions, by a death-bed, or in a house of mourning, the worthy Father displays all the best qualities of a priest, and of an Irish priest. Old Hickman and Davenport Dunn's father are the chief, and widely dissimilar representatives of another class, without which, Irish life as it was sixty years ago, could never be properly depicted, and which he has largely utilised in his novels; the Irish money-lending agent who hurried the reckless squire to his destruction, compassing it by extortionate interest and all sorts of legal chicanery, till the servant became the master and turned his old employer out of his own doors. These, and his *militaires*, are Lever's favourite types; we need not adduce further examples; and we repeat that anything beyond a very superficial criticism will, we think, acquit him on a charge of repetition to any serious extent.

What we have hitherto said as to Lever's delineations of character, must be understood to refer to his male characters only. With the other sex his success has been by no means equal, and does not indeed very often reach beyond mediocrity. His sketches constantly err in one of two opposite extremes—either they are characterised by a stiff and dull conventionalism, or they are *bizarres*, extravagant, and unnatural.

He has not many types, and the individuals who represent them are constantly similar, and sometimes identical. Among his heroines proper there is a strange absence of variety. There is but little to dis-

tinguish Lucy Dashwood from Helen D'Arcy, or Marie de Meudon, or Louisa Bellew, or Lady Julia Egerton, or the Kate Kearney of his last novel, or indeed any one of his heroines from any of the rest. But not only are they all alike, which is bad—to our thinking they are decidedly uninteresting, which is worse—and we make their acquaintance without any emotion, save, perhaps, that of surprise at the instantaneous passion with which they inspire the heroes and their “assistants.” Yet they are certainly not stupid; some of them, indeed, are painfully intellectual, (Sybella Kellet, for example, was equally great in finance, political economy, and landscape-gardening); but in conversation, when they are grave, their tone is didactic, and when they indulge in a lighter vein, they seldom display the *naïveté* and *espièglerie* proper to the humour and raillery of bright young girls; if they confess their passion, the confession is made in the measured phrases of the ‘Polite Letter-writer;’ and their rejected suitors are dismissed with a homily, a pastoral benediction, and the honorary rank of brother.

They are beautiful, of course; equally of course they are truthful, dutiful, self-denying, and chaste as Diana; they are indeed full of all the virtues; but we find them faultily faultless, and the monotony of their perfection rather bores and oppresses us. How they captivated, and were captivated by, all these fighting, frolicsome, hare-brained, and highly irregular young men, we are puzzled to understand, until we remark that it is always love at first sight—the merest glimpse being sufficient to inspire a mutual flame which induces the gentleman to undertake the labours of Hercules, and the lady to rival the constancy of Penelope. Baby Blake is worth a hun-

dred of these *beau-ideal* heroines; a dash of her and of Donna Inez would have taken the chill off their icy regularity; and the frank ardour and military *abandon* of Minette, the delightful little *cavandière* of the 4th Cuirassiers, would have made them less “proper,” perhaps, but infinitely more lovable. Why do we see so little of those whom we recognise as our own flesh and blood? and having shown that flesh and blood are at his command, why does he so often prefer the lay figure to the living model? The reason may partly be, that, at the time Lever wrote his great novels, ladies were, no doubt, much more conventional than they are now, and a novelist could not, perhaps, venture to let his heroine in high life indulge her individuality at the expense of the “sealed pattern;” and, indeed, we rather think Baby Blake was considered “shocking” when she first made her appearance.

But the sensation novel, the girl of the period, and the general development of the hitherto oppressed sex, have given us all broader views; and we are surprised that, in his later works, Lever's heroines have not profited more largely by their emancipation.

We would not wish them to be less virtuous, but that their virtues should be less stilted and less insisted upon.

Another common and equally conventional type is his aristocratic mother, who schemes matrimonially for her offspring; and when we have made the acquaintance of Lady Charlotte Hinton and Lady Wallineourt, we know them all. Their titles are different, but that is the only difference. The *raison d'être* of those ladies, for the purposes of the author, is to thwart the hero, who is usually at one part of his career both an “ineligible” and a “detrimental;” and they play

their rôle conventionally, and devote themselves to it with conscientious concentration and uniformity. We must except from the general list of *grandes dames* Lady Eleanor D'Arcy, not that she is a very striking character, but because she is lovable, and because she is relieved from the duty of persecuting the hero by the fact that he is eligible, the opposition coming in this instance from the other side, under conduct of his mother, Lady Netherby, in the regulation style.

Not erring on the side of conventionalism, certainly, are the formidable sister of Mr. Bagenal Daly and some slighter sketches, ending with Miss Betty O'Shea in 'Lord Kilgobbin,' of the same type—an elderly spinster whom an early blight of the affections has developed, not into a shrew, but into a violent man in petticoats; kind-hearted, indeed, but with a tongue like a tomahawk, and the temper of a tigress, which keeps her perpetually on the verge of assault and battery, and makes her, though on the side of "the moralities," terrible as Nemesis in that position. This is not an exaggeration, it is a distortion of nature. A disappointed woman is often a most unpleasant person to associate with, but her unpleasantness is revealed in a shrewish, feline, and essentially feminine way; it does not proclaim itself in the voice and swagger of a buccaneer.

Lever has been perfectly successful, however, where, instead of asking us to admire his females of the higher type, he has invited us to rejoice with unquenchable laughter over the follies and vulgarities of another class.

His fun about the sex is infinitely better than his earnest; here he gives the rein to his broadest humour, and he and we are carried away, convulsed, into the realms of extravaganza and bur-

lesque. Mrs. Kenny Dodd and Mrs. Paul Rooney are his *chefs-d'œuvre* here; if they are unnatural, they are certainly immortal, and we would not have them other than they are. Could anything be better done than the gullibility and the ambition of Mrs. Rooney and their *pari passu* progress?—anything more overwhelmingly ludicrous than the scrapes and escapades of Mrs. Dodd? The manœuvring widow, the vulgar match-maker, the campaigning spinster of many a stricken field—these are the female types on which the cunning of Lever's hand is best displayed, and some of the best of all his efforts have been made in this field. Indeed no one has surpassed him in it, and this triumphant success goes far to atone for his failures in delineation at a higher level. It appears to us that, in his greatest novels, his own interest was too much centred in the separate action of the heroes, which often bears but remotely on the development of the plot; that he was too much absorbed in the incidents of their campaigns, and in their own adventures and hairbreadth 'scapes, to have much thought to spare for the damsels who were languishing for them at home. We constantly lose sight of these ladies, and forget all about them for long periods, and everything is going well with us, for the hero is happily as oblivious as ourselves, till suddenly some unlucky association reminds the gallant of his love. Then, indeed, he makes up for weeks of forgetfulness by a passionate reverie, a frenzied soliloquy, and an amount of woe, desolation, and despair, which sit strangely on the young gentleman who, ten minutes ago, was chanting that frantic bacchanalian by the bivouac fire, and who, in another ten minutes, will again be the life of the party, and clamouring for "a bottle more."

It seems as if the love and the ladies were simply introduced out of deference to the prescriptive rights of novel-readers, and we seem to feel that they bore the author as much as they bore ourselves. He labours at them conscientiously, however, but only to make his books too long, and to encourage the dissolute habit of skipping. He has treated, as we have already said, the fair sex most successfully from a comic point of view, and the best use he has made of the tender passion is to burlesque it. As a good specimen of his style when in this humour, we extract from the 'Knight of Gwynne' a delightful dialogue which takes place between a certain Mr. Dempsey, an elderly bachelor, and Mrs. Fumbally, a widow lady, in whose boarding-house he resides. Mr. Dempsey has conceived an ardent and entirely misplaced passion for a lovely young lady of high station, whom, with her mother, an untoward accident has brought as a temporary sojourner to the same establishment, and thus he and his landlady discourse upon the subject:—

"Isn't she very young, Mr. Dempsey?" said Mrs. Fum, slyly.

"Twenty, or thereabouts, I take it," said Paul, carelessly—"quite suitable as regards age."

"I never thought you'd marry, Mr. Dempsey," said Mrs. Fum, with a languishing look, that contrasted strangely with the habitually shrewish expression of the 'Panther's' face.

"Can't help it, Mrs. Fum. The last of the Romans! No more Dempseys when I'm gone, if I don't. Elder branch all dropped off—last twig of the younger myself."

"Ah! these are considerations indeed!" sighed the lady. "But don't you think that a person more like yourself in taste—more similar in opinion of the world? She looks proud, Mr. Dempsey; I should say, overbearingly proud."

"Rather proud myself, if that's all," said Dempsey, drawing himself up, and protruding his chin with a most comic imitation of dignity.

"Only becomingly so, Mr. Dempsey—a proper sense of self-respect, a due feeling for your future position in life—I never saw more than that, I must say. Now, I couldn't help remarking the way that young lady threw herself into the chair, and the glance she gave at the room. It was number eight, Mr. Dempsey, with the chintz furniture, and the looking-glass over the chimney! well, really, you'd say, it was poor Leonard's room, with the settee bed in the corner—the look she gave it!"

"Indeed!" exclaimed Dempsey, who really felt horrified at this undervaluing judgment of what every boarder regarded as the very sanctum of the Fumbally Temple.

"Truth, every word of it!" resumed Mrs. Fum. "I thought my ears deceived me, as she said to her mother, 'Oh, it's all very neat and clean!'—neat and clean, Mr. Dempsey! The elegant rug which I worked myself—the pointer—and the wild duck."

"Like life, by Jove! if it wasn't that the dog has only three legs."

"Perspective, Mr. Dempsey—don't forget its perspective; and if the bird's wings are maroon, I couldn't help it—it was the only colour to be had in the town."

"The group is fine—devilish fine!" said Paul, with the air of one whose word was final.

"Neat and clean" were the expressions she used! I could have cried as I heard it. Here the lady, probably in consideration for the omission, wiped her eyes, and dropped her voice to a very sympathetic key.

"She meant it well—depend upon it, Mrs. Fum, she meant it well."

"And the old lady," resumed Mrs. Fumbally, deaf to every consolation, lay back in her chair this way, and said, "Oh, it will all do very well—you'll not find us troublesome, Mrs. Flumary!" I haven't been the head of this establishment eight-and-twenty years to be called Flumary. How these airs are to be tolerated by the other boarders, I'm sure is more than I can say.

"It appeared more than Mr. Dempsey could say also, if one might pronounce from the woe-begone expres-

sion of his face; for, up to this moment, totally wrapped up in the mysterious portion of the affair, he had lost sight of all the conflicting interests this sudden advent would call into activity.

"That wasn't all," continued Mrs. Fumbally; 'for when I told them the dinner-hour was five, the old lady interrupted me with—'For the present—with your permission—we should prefer dining at six.' Did any one ever hear the like? I'll have a pretty rebellion in the house, when it gets out! Mrs. Mackay will have her tea up-stairs every night—Mr. Dunlop will always breakfast in bed. I wouldn't be surprised if Miss Boyle stood out for broth in the middle of the day.'

"Oh!" exclaimed Paul, holding up both hands in horror.

"I vow and protest, I expect that next!" exclaimed Mrs. Fum, as folding her arms, and fixing her eyes rigidly on the grate, she sat, the ideal of abused and injured benevolence. 'Indeed, Mr. Dempsey,' said she, after a long silence on both sides, 'it would be a great breach of the regard many years of intimacy with you has formed, if I did not say that your affections are misplaced. Beauty is a perishable gift.'

"Paul looked at Mrs. Fumbally, and seemed struck with the truth of her remark.

"But the qualities of the mind, Mr. Dempsey, those rare endowments that make happy the home and hearth. You're fond of beef-hash with pickled onions,' said she, smiling sweetly; 'well, you shall have one to-day.'

"Good creature!" muttered Paul, while he pressed her hand affectionately. 'The best heart in the world!'

"Ah, yes," sighed the lady, half soliloquising; 'conformity of temper—the pliancy of the reed—the tender attachment of the ivy.'

"Paul coughed, and drew himself up proudly, and, as if a sudden thought occurred to him that he resembled an oak of the forest, he planted his feet firmly, and stood stiff and erect.

"You are not half careful enough about yourself, Mr. Dempsey—never attend to changing your damp clothes—and I assure you the climate here requires it; and when you come in, cold and wet, you should always step

in here, on your way up-stairs, and take a little something warm and cordial. I don't know if you approve of this,' suiting the action to the words. Mrs. Fum had opened a small cupboard in the wall, and taken out a quaint-looking flask, and a very diminutive glass.

"Nectar, by Jove!—downright nectar.'

"Made with some white currants and ginger," chimed in Mrs. Fum, simply, as if to imply—See what skill can effect—behold the magic power of intelligence!

"White currants and ginger!" echoed Paul, holding out the glass to be refilled.

"A trifle of spirits, of course.'

"Of course! couldn't be comforting without it.'

"That's what poor dear Fumbally always called, 'Ye know, ye know!'" It was his droll way of saying "Noyau!" Here Mrs. F. displayed a conflict of smiles and tears; a perfect April landscape of her features. 'He had such spirits.'

"I don't wonder, if he primed himself with this often," said Dempsey, who at last relinquished his glass, but with evident unwillingness.

"He used to say that his was a happy home!" sobbed Mrs. Fum, while she pressed her handkerchief to her face.

"Paul did not well know what he should say, or if, indeed, he was called upon to utter a sentiment at all; but he thought he could have drunk another glass to the late Fum's memory, if his widow hadn't kept such a tight grip of the flask.

"Oh, Mr. Dempsey, who could have thought it would come to this?" The sorrowful drooping of her eyelids, as she spoke, seemed to intimate an allusion to the low state of the decanter, and Dempsey at once replied—

"There's a very honest glass in it still.'

"Kind—kind creature!" sobbed Mrs. Fum, as she poured out the last of the liquor. And Paul was sorely puzzled, whether the encomium applied to the defunct or himself. 'Do you know, Mr. Dempsey'—here she gave a kind of hysterical giggle, that might take any turn, hilarious or the reverse,

as events should dictate—'do you know, that as I see you there, standing before the fire, looking so pleasant and cheerful, so much at home, as a body might say, I can't help fancying a great resemblance between you and my poor dear Fum. He was older than you,' said she, rapidly, as a slight cloud passed over Paul's features;—'older and stouter, but he had the same jocose smile, the same merry voice, and even that little fidgety habit with the hands. I know you'll forgive me—even that was his.'

"This was in all probability strictly correct, inasmuch as for several years before his demise the gifted individual had laboured under a perpetual 'Delirium tremens.'

"He rather liked this kind of thing," said Paul, pantomiming the action of drinking with his now empty glass.

"In moderation—only in moderation."

"I've heard that it disagreed with him," rejoined Paul, who, not pleased with his counterpart, resolved on showing his knowledge of his habits.

"So it did," sighed Mrs. Fum; "and he gave it up in consequence."

"I heard that, too," said Paul; and then muttered to himself, 'on the morning he died.'

We have enumerated what appear to us to be the more remarkable of Lever's intellectual qualities—viz, insight into character; power of analysing motive; a lightning perception of analogies; humour, wit, satire, and descriptive powers of universal adaptability. In addition to these, and in a great measure resulting from them, he brought to bear upon his work a constantly-increasing and thoughtfully-acquired knowledge of men and affairs; and he had yet another quality not in itself intellectual, but acting, in medical parlance, as an admirable "vehicle" for his higher gifts. This is the quality—we do not think that it is quite correctly described by the term "animal spirits," but perhaps there is no expression that more

nearly describes it—which supports the unflagging vitality of his own interest in his own handiwork, his unbounded sympathy with his own creations, and a semblance of implicit and joyous faith in the romantic illusions with which he surrounds us. When his squadrons charge, we feel that he is with them, and that their *élan* is his. It is with the gusto of an expert that he assists his practical jokers, and we can see the wicked twinkle of his eye as he lays the train and awaits the explosion. He concentrates all his subtlety on the diplomatic communings of principalities and powers, and points a repartee in a combat of wits with the *animus* and zest of a partisan. It is this which brings him to the banquet of life with a vigorous appetite for all that is set before him, and intensifies his connoisseur-like relish for that which is best.

It is an invaluable auxiliary—we may almost call it a physical auxiliary—to his mental forces, and we know of no other writer who has been so happy in its possession; but it has blinded shallow critics and superficial readers to his higher qualities, so that we find them closing his books with the verdict, "A triumph of animal spirits!" This is to confound the motive power with the thing which is moved; for this gift, entirely distinct from his great intellectual faculties, simply brought them into action with vigour and preserved their elasticity; just as the width of his sympathy was distinct from his power of delineation, although, in making all mankind his kin, it gave him the stand-point of intimate familiarity, whence he might observe, and where he might sketch them.

Lever's earlier novels—let us say the first eight—are unquestionably those by which his reputation will

be best maintained; for though his later performances are often superior in certain artistic points,—in the more skilful evolution of the plot, for instance, in the ease of the dialogue, and in a greater freedom from irrelevant matter,—still they want the *cereus* and vigour and almost profligate display of imaginative resource which characterise their predecessors. In the early books we have more merits and more defects—in the later the defects are fewer, and the merits are less decided; but, when we take each group as a whole, and place them in the scales against each other, there is no sort of doubt as to which side of the balance is undermost. The first novels contain the best of his “Irishry,”—the field where his humour most happily disports itself,—and they have to do with a period when Irish life was more picturesque than it is nowadays, and when Irish character showed to greater advantage than it does by the light of more modern events. Then Lever had, in his earliest youth, the privilege of knowing some of the eminent men who had figured prominently in the history of his country at the close of the last and commencement of the present century—and with many of their younger associates he was intimate; so that a thousand fresh traditions of the wit, the eloquence, and the exploits of his brilliant predecessors—of Burke, and Curran, and Plunkett, and Yelverton, and Grattan, and a host of other celebrities—were received into his mind, as good seed into a congenial soil.

It is obvious, too, that he had closely studied Ireland's social and political condition at the Union period, not merely to catch superficial traits of the humorous or the picturesque, which he did in such abundance, but deeply and earn-

estly, as a politician and a patriot. For Lever was intensely patriotic; he was, before everything, an Irish man. His cosmopolitan sagacity, it is true, disclosed to him the errors, the follies, and the crimes of his country; but he loved her with all his heart, and gloried in the brilliant genius of her sons. Study, experience, familiarity, and complete sympathy with his subject, therefore, were all brought to bear upon the Irish element of his novels, and the result was a success which no other Irish novelist has approached.

The other—the military—element which chiefly distinguishes these books, was not only congenial to him, but his natural bias was stimulated by the stupendous military events which came to a close in his childhood, and the memories of which were perfectly recent when he was at the age most receptive of vivid impressions. We can see—in the splendid military spectacle with which he has presented us, extending from the French Revolution to Napoleon's final eclipse—we can see how his young imagination had been captivated by his theme, and we can detect the minute care with which he had studied the military history of that period—we read them in the infinity of detail with which his pages are enriched, and in the martial fire which illuminates them.

Study and sympathy here, too, were his coadjutors, and here his descriptive powers had ample room and verge enough for boundless expatiation.

In the later novels there is no such grand central point of interest; his sympathy is less complete, and the intensity derived from early impressions is wanting, so that they pale before the greater brilliancy of their predecessors. On the other hand, in these predecessors we see more

clearly—we will not say his insensibility to the pathetic—but his inability to bring it before us; his comparative weakness as a delineator of female character; and his deficiency in constructive skill.

The most prominent result of the latter defect is one that would be fatal to books less brilliant in their details, for it is this, that the thread of the story is continually interrupted by *malapropos* anecdotes; our sympathy with the hero and our interest in the plot are brusquely arrested, and, for long chapters, we have to follow some casual *raconteur* who changes the *venue* of our interest, so that it is only by an irksome effort of memory that we dissociate the incidents of the subordinate tale from those of the novel—a difficulty not seldom increased by the subordinate tale becoming the parent of a sub-digression.

In addition to these illegitimate excursions, his stories are often too much overlaid with incidents, which, from their very number, he can only utilise for the development of the plot by violent and inartistic devices. He is encumbered by the wealth of his fancy; he lavishes on one chapter the material for a book, and on one book the material for a whole library of fiction; and we, too, embarrassed by his profusion, sometimes feel half inclined to give up the plot in despair—to divert, by a conscious effort, our interest from the final issue, and devote ourselves to the separate enjoyment of each episode as it presents itself. The improbability of Lever's incidents—of which we think more than enough has been made—will often be found to arise from the necessity of connecting these irrelevant anecdotes and superfluous incidents with the plots which they are intended to subserve—an adaptation which can sometimes only be effected at the

expense of a considerable strain on our credulity.

An over-indulgence in long soliloquies on the part of his heroes is another obstruction with which he retards the easy flow of his narrative. For this fault we may probably blame the autobiographical form which Lever employs in some of his best novels; other blemishes are traceable, though less directly, to it; and unquestionably it hampers an author more than the epic or the epistolary form, and deprives him of many resources, or only makes them available at a sacrifice of artistic symmetry. We may add to these remarks on his constructive deficiencies, that, in two or three instances, he has encumbered himself by an elaborate effort to represent the hero's fate as a sort of shuttlecock between two opposing agencies—a beneficent and a malignant one—and to keep perpetually before us the minute details of their antagonism, his difficulty being often increased by the necessity that virtue should eventually triumph.

In 'Harry Lorrequer,' Lever's first novel, we see the germ of his best merits and the full development of his worst defects; nothing could be richer than the imaginative fertility which he has lavished on its pages, and in no other book of his is constructive failure so marked. It can scarcely be said to have any plot, and it has not even the general outline of a campaign to give cohesion to its numerous links; for the military incidents are only introduced in occasional anecdotes. It purports to be the confessions of an officer, whose confessions relate principally to his doings in Ireland, where he has been quartered; but indeed the confessional is almost as much occupied by his

friends, since, if Mr. Lorrequer is not engaged in doing something noteworthy himself, he is travelling in search of new adventures, and the companions who accompany him beguile the tedium of the way with tales of their exploits. Nothing could be more amusing than this society of Ishmaelitic *farceurs*, who are equal to any extravagance and absurdity. Every man's hand is against his neighbour, but they give and take, in the way of practical jokes, with perfect equanimity; and if any one is for a moment at a loss for a friend to get him into a difficulty, Fate steps in and does it for him. Mess convivialities, military reminiscences, mystifications, personations, elopements, flirtations in earnest and in burlesque, duels real and mock, every conceivable sort of scrape, every device to compromise a man, and every possible and impossible contrivance for his disentanglement—such are the materials which make up the book.

We pass our time with this merry company in a prolonged shout of laughter; they never open their mouths except to say a good thing or to laugh at one. There is not a tragic, nor a pathetic, nor even a serious idea in it. A duel, one would imagine, might be a grave affair, even with them; but not a bit of it: the combatants brace themselves for the event with a gallon of Burgundy or so, and go forth rejoicing to the fray—to return, it must be confessed, not generally much the worse for the experience. The author, as a young author, thought no doubt that a love-affair in earnest was indispensable in a novel—and we have a love-affair; but farce hovers round the lover's wooing, and he is more enamoured of the absurd than of Dulcinea—his sighs are sobs of

laughter, and the "assistants" are all on the broad grin. We have not a moment's breathing-time; we are hurried on without respite from the astonishing and the ludicrous, until we reach the end of the book, when, if our sides ache, it must be admitted that we do feel that it is possible to have a little too much of a good thing.

In 'Charles O'Malley'—Lever's second novel,—the defects are, as might be expected, much less conspicuous; and the merits are greater and more various, but in 'Jack Hinton,' which followed it, he reaches a point of general excellence beyond which, we do not think he has advanced in any subsequent performance. In this book we have a view of the Irish life of the period, which is almost as exhaustive in its details as it is brilliantly presented to us. It was commenced, he tells us, with something like a design of caricaturing English ignorance of Irish ways; and with this purpose, he takes for his hero a young English Guardsman, and suddenly transplants him from the placid atmosphere of London *haut ton* into the rollicking and tempestuous life of the Irish metropolis. His original design was abandoned, however; and, save that the hero admits as he goes along that many of his prejudices were unfounded, and that he, to a certain extent, demonstrates the honesty of his avowal by marrying an Irish lady, we hear no more of it, and the impetus of the story is unchecked by any of the conditions of a specially-directed satire.

Tragedy, some little pathos, sober discussion, genteel comedy, and broadest farce, in turn lend their aid to expound and illustrate the author's theme. We become acquainted with Irishmen of every grade; we see the Irish tempera

ment at its best; we see its boldness and generosity, its blending of recklessness with deep feeling, of a wild spirit of adventure with a child's docile tenderness; and we see it at its worst—suspicious, crafty, double, sullen, and brutal. We see the prodigality of the squire miniaturized in the peasant's thriftlessness; and note that, with them all, the possible is equivalent to the probable, and the probable to the certain. We revel with the "Mopks of the Screw;" we listen to the sallies of Curran and Plunkett, and pass thence through every grade of the comic, from the boundless drollery of Bob Mahon to the grotesque and acid humour of Corny Delany. We find ourselves, like Jack Hinton, in a new and undreamed-of world; but we soon get used to it. No improbability startles us, and the impossible becomes only a trifling obstacle. The oceans of Burgundy and poteen we drink may account for that, as they may account for the humorous gusto with which we survey our own misfortunes—as they may account for our constant love-affairs, our feats of horsemanship, and incessant appeals to that "saw-handled pistol;" but they cannot explain the Machiavellian subtlety with which we baffle the ever-hovering bailiff, nor the financial skill with which we mortgage a minus quantity, nor the address with which we bite the biter, and prove ourselves Tartars to all kinds of captors.

No, it is the *perfervidum ingenium* of Paddyland breathed through the *perfervidum ingenium* of Charles Lever, which has inspired us; and we feel that, under such an inspiration, all these things are possible to us. Improbability? Let us leave the narrow-minded critic to gnaw that bone to his heart's content. Who else cares to discuss it? We have something better to do. We have

found a new world, and, preferring it to the old, we would enjoy it without let or hindrance. We find in it a trifle too much gunpowder and lead, perhaps, and the stimulants are rather too plentiful; but this only makes us regret that, with so many lethal agencies at work, the merry life must certainly be a short one.

Jack goes to the wars, too; and we have some fine military episodes—Vittoria, the retreat from Burgos, his own capture by the enemy, a glimpse of the *morale* of a defeated French army, and others—all most powerfully done; but it is principally for its Irish element that we read this book, and pronounce it, in that respect, Lever's *chef-d'œuvre*.

It is impossible, within our limits, to extract any of the very best of the episodes, because they will not bear abridgment; but the following passage is a fair specimen of the fun of an Irish *farceur*, and gives us an idea of the devil-may-care habits of the Irish sporting gentleman of the period. A party of the "Galway Blazers," having lost their way in a wild part of the country, come, towards night, upon "Newgate"—the mansion of Major Bob Mahon. This mansion has an imposing exterior, but is, in reality, little better than a shell; for it has only two completed rooms, and the remainder are all deficient either of roofs or of floors, or of both. Bob, who is as insolvent an Irishman as ever bailiff hunted, is somewhat taken aback when he finds that he is expected not only to feed fourteen hungry hunters, but to put them up for the night. He rallies himself quickly, however, and contrives to solve the difficulty, and, at the same time, to gratify his love of mischief, by a *coup de main*.

The guests are plentifully regaled upon bacon and eggs; and when they have washed down this homely fare with unlimited poteen, their

host introduces them to their sleeping quarters.

"My guests were, to do them justice, a good illustration of my theory. A pleasanter and a merrier party never sat down together. We had good songs, good stories, plenty of laughing, and plenty of drink; until at last, poor Darby became so overpowered, by the fumes of the hot water, I suppose, that he was obliged to be carried up to bed, and so we were compelled to boil the kettle in the parlour. This, I think, precipitated matters; for, by some mistake, they put punch into it instead of water, and the more you tried to weaken the liquor, it was only the more tipsy you were getting.

"About two o'clock, five of the party were under the table, three more were nodding backwards and forwards like insane pendulums, and the rest were mighty noisy, and now and then rather disposed to be quarrelsome.

"Bob," said Lambert to me, in a whisper, 'if it's the same thing to you, I'll slip away, and get into bed.'

"Of course, if you won't take anything more. Just make yourself at home; and as you don't know the way here, follow me!"

"I'm afraid," said he, 'I'd not find my way alone.'

"I think," said I, 'it's very likely. But, come along!'

"I walked up-stairs before him; but instead of turning to the left, I went the other way, till I came to the door of the large room that I have told you already was over the big drawing-room. Just as I put my hand on the lock, I contrived to blow out the candle, as if it was the wind.

"What a draught there is here!" said I; 'but just step in, and I'll go for a light.'

"He did as he was bid; but instead of finding himself on my beautiful little carpet, down he went fourteen feet into the hay at the bottom! I looked down after him for a minute or two, and then called out—

"As I am doing the honours of Newgate, the least I could do was to show you the drop. Good night, Dan! but let me advise you to get a little further from the door, as there are more coming."

"Well, sir, when they missed Dan and me out of the room, two or three more stood up, and declared for bed also. The first I took up was Ffrench, of Green Park; for, indeed, he wasn't a 'cute fellow at the best of times; and if it wasn't that the hay was so low, he'd never have guessed it was not a feather-bed till he woke in the morning. Well down he went. Then came Eyre! Then Joe Mahon—two-and-twenty stone—no less! Lord pity them!—this was a great shock entirely! But when I opened the door for Tom Burke, upon my conscience you'd think it was a Pandemonium they had down there. They were fighting like devils, and roaring with all their might.

"Good night, Tom!" said I, pushing Burke forward. 'It's the cows you hear underneath.'

"Cows!" said he. 'If they're cows, begad they must have got at that seventy-three gallons of poteen you talked of; for they're all drunk.'

"With that he snatched the candle out of my hand and looked down into the pit. Never was such a sight seen before or since. Dan was pitching into poor Ffrench, who thinking he had an enemy before him, was hitting out manfully at an old turf-creel, that rocked and creaked at every blow, as he called out,

"I'll smash you! I'll dinge your ribs for you, you infernal scoundrel!"

"Eyre was struggling in the hay, thinking he was swimming for his life; and poor Joe Mahon was patting him on the head, and saying, 'Poor fellow! good dog!' for he thought it was Towser, the bull-terrier, that was prowling round the calves of his legs.

"If they don't get tired, there'll not be a man of them alive by morning!" said Tom, as he closed the door. 'And now, if you'll allow me to sleep on the carpet, I'll take it as a favour.'

"By this time they were all quiet in the parlour; so I lent Tom a couple of blankets and a bolster, and having locked my door, went to bed with an easy mind and a quiet conscience. To be sure, now and then a cry would burst forth, as if they were killing somebody below-stairs; but I soon fell asleep, and heard no more of them.

"By daybreak next morning they

made their escape; and when I was trying to awake, at half-past ten, I found Colonel M'Morris, of the Mayo, with a message from the whole four.

"'A bad business this, Captain Malton,' said he; 'my friends have been shockingly treated.'

"'It's mighty hard,' said I, 'to want to shoot me, because I hadn't fourteen feather-beds in the house.'

"'They will be the laugh of the whole country, sir.'

"'Troth!' said I, 'if the country is not in very low spirits, I think they will.'

"'There's not a man of them can see!—their eyes are actually closed up!'

"'The Lord be praised!' said I. 'It's not likely they'll hit me.'

"But, to make a short story of it, out we went. Tom Burke was my friend; I could scarce hold my pistol with laughing, for such faces no man ever looked at. But for self-preservation sake, I thought it best to hit one of them; so I just pinked Ffrench a little under the skirt of the coat.

"'Come, Lambert!' said the Colonel, 'it's your turn now.'

"'Wasn't that Lambert,' said I, 'that I hit?'

"'No,' said he, 'that was Ffrench.' J

"'Begad, I'm sorry for it. Ffrench, my dear fellow, excuse me; for you see you're all so like each other about the eyes this morning—'

"'With this there was a roar of laughing from them all, in which, I assure you, Lambert took not a very prominent part; for, somehow, he didn't fancy my polite inquiries after him; and so we all shook hands, and left the ground as good friends as ever, though to this hour the name of Newgate brings less pleasant recollections to their minds than if their fathers had been hanged at its prototype."

'Jack Hinton,' as we have said, is Lever's best novel, in so far as the Irish element is concerned; and in 'Tom Burke' the pomp and circumstances and romance of war have been set forth with the greatest effect. In 'Charles O'Malley' there is a happy blending of these his two favourite ingredients; and if we hesitate to agree with the opinion

that it is the very best of all his books, we must admit that it is the most generally popular, and that it contains two characters which, as far as humour is concerned, are on the whole the best he has drawn. There can be no question, however, that in this group of novels we have an epitome of Lever's most distinguished excellences, and that it is upon them that his fame as a novelist will mainly rest.

The interest in 'Tom Burke' and 'Charles O'Malley' is exceedingly vivid throughout; not from the skillful evolution of clever plots—for the plots are full of the blemishes upon which we have already remarked—but from the exciting nature of the incidents, and the admirable way in which history is interwoven with fiction. The *dramatis personæ* of Lever's creation take part in the great events with which history has made us familiar, and historical characters descend from their pedestals to move and act amidst scenes and with associates that are the offspring of the author's fancy. Thus the romantic sheds a glow upon the real, and illusion gains strength by contact with reality.

Not a little of the interest of 'Tom Burke' is made to depend upon the personal action of the great Napoleon, who constantly appears upon the scene, not merely to fight battles in war or diplomacy, but to affect the minute incidents of the story; and Lever has displayed much skill in choosing "situations" for his introduction, each incident being selected with a view to bringing out in strong relief some of the great man's distinctive characteristics. Good use, too, has been made of the almost fanatical devotion with which the Emperor inspired every unit of his armies; and we have a representation of a contest which goes on in the

mind of Tom Burke, the hero, between this sentiment and a growing perception of the moral baseness of Napoleon. We are allowed to watch each progressive stage of a painful struggle against disillusionment, until resistance is no longer possible; and the apostle of freedom and civilisation, stripped of the attributes with which his idealising worshipper had endowed him, stands revealed to his eyes as the unprincipled usurper, and the subverter of the rights of man. The disenchantment brings anguish to the noble soul of the young soldier; but the glamour of the mighty genius is still upon him; he is still spell-bound, and averting his eyes from the dark side of his idol's character, he desperately seeks to blind them in the blaze of glory which surrounds him as a conqueror. It is a passion which resists counsel and overcomes conviction; which leads him to forgive personal insult and wrong, and brings him back to the no longer victorious standards, forgetful of everything save that it is the Emperor's hour of need. The strength of the infatuation, so universal in the Imperial ranks, is strikingly brought before us by the contrast between the chivalrous devotion of the follower, and the cold, unscrupulous baseness of his chief; and it is one of the most remarkable features in the book. Wellington, too, has been utilised as a *dramatis persona* in "Charles O'Malley," with considerable success; the same romantic interest could not, of course, attach itself to his impossible character; but we have a lifelike study of him, and the great Duke is occasionally of considerable service to the author, especially when he wishes to produce his effects by contrast or surprise.

The association of these two personages whose individualities are so

familiar to every mind, and of other eminent men of the period, with the purely imaginary characters of the books, is most skilfully done, and forms a graceful bridge between fact and fiction, whereby we pass to and fro, with such facility, from one to the other, that we forget all about the gulf that separates them. Wellington and Napoleon are frequently brought into familiar contact with the heroes and prominent characters, sometimes to rebuke, sometimes to reward them, and sometimes when a *deus ex machina* is called for, to extricate them from some apparently inextricable difficulty. For comic effects, this placing of grand historical personages in juxtaposition to the novelist's own humorous creations, is wonderfully telling. It is perhaps difficult to conceive two characters more contrasted and incongruous than Wellington and Shakespeare's Falstaff; the bare idea of coupling them together provokes a smile; and a combination equally humorous has been presented to us by Lever in the occasional association of Major Monsoon with the hero of Waterloo. Monsoon is really the Falstaff of modern fiction; and, in the whole range of it, there are few characters more admirably drawn or so intensely comical. Nothing could be better than his quaint and racy humor, his epicurean philosophy, his egregious self-indulgence, his serio-comic moralisings, and his defences of his own iniquities, in which he deceives neither his audience nor himself, and would not, even if he could, deprive either of the fun of detecting the imposture. With a cynical contempt for military glory, with no stomach for the fray, and an inventive vein as to his own exploits, recalling the doughty antagonist of the "nine men clad in buckram," he is placed in the middle of events which stir the blood of the phleg-

matic and make heroes of the chivalrous, and pillage at once becomes the central idea of his mind. To enrich himself, to eat and drink inordinately of the best, and to keep himself out of harm's way—these are to him the only objects of a campaigning life; and so, when he falls in with the austere model of the severer military virtues, we anticipate delightful results, and we are not disappointed. The Major naturally gets into trouble when he comes across "Sir Arthur;" but, after imminent peril, always manages to escape by the luck which never deserts him at his sorest pinch. Every one likes the old rascal, and we share the sentiment; and convinced that we could much better spare a better man, we are all delighted that there is not a fatal termination to the following episode:—

"'Lord! how thirsty it makes me to think of it! my throat is actually parched, —I was near being hanged!'"

"'Hanged!'"

"'Yes. Upon my life it's true; very horrible, ain't it? It had a great effect upon my nervous system; and they never thought of any little pension to me as a recompense for my sufferings.'"

"'And who was barbarous enough to think of such a thing, Major?'"

"'Sir Arthur Wellesley himself; none other, Charley.'"

"'Oh, it was a mistake, Major, or a joke.'"

"'It was devilish near being a practical one, though. I'll tell you how it occurred. After the battle of Vimiera, the brigade to which I was attached had their headquarters at San Pietro, a large convent, where all the church plate for miles around was stored up for safety. A sergeant's guard was accordingly stationed over the refectory, and every precaution taken to prevent pillage, Sir Arthur himself having given particular orders on the subject. Well, somehow,—I never could find

out how,—but in leaving the place, all the waggons of our brigade had got some trifling articles of small value scattered, as it might be, among their stores—gold cups, silver candlesticks, Virgin Marys' ivory crucifixes, saints' eyes set in topazes, and martyrs' toes in silver filagree, and a hundred other similar things.

"'One of those confounded bullock-carts broke down just at the angle of the road where the Commander-in-Chief was standing with his staff to watch the troops defile, and out rolled among bread-rations and salt beef, a whole avalanche of precious relics and church ornaments. Every one stood aghast! Never was there such a misfortune. No one endeavoured to repair the mishap, but all looked on in terrified amazement as to what was to follow.

"'Who has the command of this detachment?' shouted out Sir Arthur, in a voice that made more than one of us tremble.

"'Monsoon, your Excellency—Major Monsoon, of the Portuguese brigade.'"

"'The d—d old rogue!—I know him.' Upon my life that's what he said, "Hang him up on the spot," pointing with his finger as he spoke; "we shall see if this practice cannot be put a stop to." And with these words he rode leisurely away, as if he had been merely ordering dinner for a small party.

"'When I came up to the place, the halberts were fixed, and Gronow, with a company of the Fusiliers under arms, beside them.

"'Devilish sorry for it, Major,'" said he; "it's confoundedly unpleasant, but can't be helped. We've got orders to see you hanged!"

"'Faith it was just so he said it, tapping his snuff-box as he spoke, and looking carelessly about him. Now, had it not been for the fixed halberts and the Provost-Marshal, I'd not have believed him; but one glance at them, and another at the bullock-cart with all the holy images, told me at once what had happened.

"'He only means to frighten me a little? Isn't that all, Gronow?" cried I, in a supplicating voice.

"'Very possible, Major,'" said he, "but I must execute my orders."

"'You'll surely not—'" Before

I could finish, up came Dan Mackinnon, cantering smartly. "Going to hang old Monsoon, eh, Gronow? What fun!"

"Ain't it, though?" said I, half blubbering.

"Well, if you're a good Catholic, you may have your choice of a saint, for, by Jupiter! there's a strong muster of them here." This cruel allusion was made in reference to the gold and silver effigies that lay scattered about the highway.

"Dan," said I, in a whisper, "intercede for me—do, like a good, kind fellow. You have influence with Sir Arthur."

"You old sinner," said he, "it's useless."

"Dan, I'll forgive you the fifteen pounds."

"That you owe me," said Dan, laughing.

"Who'll ever be the father to you I have been? Who'll mix your punch with burnt Madeira, when I'm gone?" said I.

"Well, really, I am sorry for you, Monsoon. I say, Gronow, don't tuck him up for a few minutes; I'll speak for the old villain, and, if I succeed, I'll wave my handkerchief."

"Well, away went Dan at a full gallop. Gronow sat down on a bank, and I fidgeted about in no very enviable frame of mind, the confounded Provost-Marshal eyeing me all the while.

"I can only give you five minutes more, Major," said Gronow, placing his watch beside him on the grass. I tried to pray a little, and said three or four of Solomon's proverbs, when he again called out,—"There, you see, it won't do! Sir Arthur is shaking his head."

"What's that waving yonder?"

"The colours of the 6th Foot.—Come, Major, off with your stock."

"Where is Dan now—what is he doing?"—for I could see nothing myself.

"He's riding beside Sir Arthur. They all seem laughing."

"God forgive them! what an awful retrospect this will prove to some of them."

"Time's up!" said Gronow, jumping up and replacing his watch in his pocket.

"Provost-Marshal, be quick now —"

"Eh! what's that?—there I see it waving!—there's a shout, too!"

"Ay, by Jove! so it is;—well, you're saved this time, Major—that's the signal."

"So saying, Gronow formed his fellows in line and resumed his march quite coolly, leaving me alone on the roadside to meditate over martial law and my pernicious taste for relics.

"Well, Charley, this gave me a great shock, and I think, too, it must have had a great effect upon Sir Arthur himself; but, upon my life, he has wonderful nerves. I met him one day afterwards at dinner in Lisbon; he looked at me very hard for a few seconds—"Eh, Monsoon! Major Monsoon, I think?"

"Yes, your Excellency," said I, briefly, thinking how painful it must be for him to meet me.

"Thought I had hanged you—know I intended it; no matter—a glass of wine with you?"

With two such characters as Mickey Free and Major Monsoon, 'Charles O'Malley' is indeed rich. The former is, it is true, not so much of a creation; he is rather a somewhat idealised portrait drawn from a type we have all met with—the cheery, rather unscrupulous, infinitely versatile, resourceful, and witty Irishman; but the portrait could only have been drawn by an artist of the highest genius and of the finest Irish humour—by Lever himself, in fact.

In 'Tom Burke' we breathe a more serious and romantic atmosphere than in 'Charles O'Malley,' and the drama of war is less relieved by gay *divertissements* and the lighter characteristics of the actors. One reason for this is that here, for the most part, the actors are not Irishmen—and it is for them that Lever reserves the best of his fun; so that, wherever two or three of his countrymen are gathered together, "diversion" and "devilry" are cer-

tain to take place without any reference to the fitness of things; and it is generally among other nationalities that he escapes into a soberer vein. Another reason is, that the author's inspiration in writing this book was derived from his own enthusiasm for the military genius of Napoleon: his interest in the great man was paramount to his interest in all the other characters; and with the shadow of so sombre a presence in so many of its pages, we often feel that mirth and revelry would be inadmissible.

In either novel we can campaign to our hearts' content, and take part in actions of equal moment; but in one case we are inspired with the stern and resolute spirit of the "Vieille Garde," and in the other we carry to the battle the *cœur léger* of the rollicking Irish dragoon. There is, perhaps, not much to choose between the books as to the power displayed in the grand military descriptions of which we have already spoken. Take any of these descriptions at random, and you will find it excellent; make selections, and you will discover merits unsurpassed in the language.

Lintz, Austerlitz, Ulm, Jena, Auerstadt, the Douro, Talavera, Fuentes d'Onoro, Ciudad Rodrigo, Quatre Bras, Waterloo. What themes for what an artist! Every name must have been an inspiration to Lever's soldier-like spirit, and the inspiration of each is legible in the glowing records he has left of the events which they represent. Always carefully preserving the historical *tout ensemble* of his battles, he calls upon fiction to supply something striking for the foregrounds; some salient circumstance constantly projects itself from the general movement, to vivify our interest, whether it be the signal exploit of a brigade or a regiment, the triumph of a handful of *voltigeurs*

against fearful odds, or some deed of "derring-do" achieved by a single individual, before which the action of the armies is arrested in a Homeric pause. Thus, from the realms of fancy and from the archives of history he gathers his materials with an equal hand, and the ardour of a soldier-like spirit and the genius of the artist working harmoniously together, evolve from them results that are unique in our literature. In these books, besides the military history, and a store of information about Ireland and the Irish, we have revelations of the social and political condition of the French at various critical epochs, which are of much interest and value; enabling us, as they do, to appreciate the shifting phases of the national life, as in turn we survey the France of the Revolution, of the Directory, of the Consulate, of the Empire, and of the Restoration. And here we may especially mention the skill displayed in descriptions of the State ceremonials and observances of the upstart court of the new sovereignty, when Napoleon saw that the time had arrived to lay aside the garb of republican simplicity, which had never sat gracefully on the nation, and to gratify the national vanity and love of display by a grandeur and luxury which eclipsed the chaster splendour of the old *régime*. Most graphically has Lever depicted the style—half *bourgeois*, half *militaire*—of the new courtiers; the contempt of the stern old warriors of the Republic for their unfamiliar rôle; the anxious pride of the ladies in their suddenly-attained eminence; and the attitude of all the female world beneath, who, looking up, and seeing an *ex-vivandière* in Madame la Marechale, and a sergeant's wife in Madame la Duchesse, assure themselves that, for once, neither reason nor experience imposes any limits upon their hopes and ambitions.

The intrigues of the great police minister; the Imperial coquettings with the Royalists, the scornful isolation of the Faubourg St. Germain, and the simple refinement of the life there, in contrast with the garish magnificence of the Tuileries, are all splendidly done; and the fickle, vain, volatile, pleasure-loving populace are photographed in all their moods with an ever-consistent fidelity. The following extract affords a fair example of Lever's skill in placing before us a military spectacle; in depicting the sentiment of the army toward Napoleon; and of the happy way in which he familiarises us with the great man's character by always introducing him with incidents that bring out in relief some of his idiosyncrasies. In the following instance we see his frank *bonhomie* with the lower ranks of the army, and his adroitness in awakening their enthusiasm by little dramatic effects. The wounded, returning after Austerlitz, enter Paris in a sort of triumph, and are received by the Emperor and the army on their arrival.

"Scarcely had the Emperor issued from the Tuileries, when ten thousand shouts of '*Vive l'Empereur!*' rent the air; the cannon of the Invalides thundered forth at the same moment, and the crash of the military bands added their clangour to the sounds of joy. He rode slowly along the line, stopping frequently to speak with some of the soldiers, and giving orders to his suite concerning them. Of the officers in his staff that day, the greater number had been wounded at Austerlitz, and still bore the traces of their injuries. Rapp displayed a tremendous scar from a sabre across his cheek; Sebastiani wore his sword-arm in a sling; and Friant, unable to mount his horse, followed the Emperor on foot, leaning on a stick, and walking with great difficulty.

"The sight of these brave men, whose devotion to Napoleon had been proved

on so many battle-fields, added to the interest of the scene, and tended to excite popular enthusiasm to its utmost; but on Napoleon still all eyes were bent. The general who led their armies to victory, the monarch who raised France to the proudest place among the nations, was there, within a few paces of them. Each word he spoke was sinking deeply into some heart, prouder of that moment than of rank or riches.

"So slow was the Emperor's progress along the ranks, that it was near three o'clock before he had arrived at the extremity of the line. The cavalry were now ordered to form in squadrons, and move past in close order. While this movement was effecting, a cannon-shot at the *barrière* announced the approach of the convoy. The cavalry were halted in line once more, and the same moment the first waggon of the train appeared above the summit of the hill. So secretly had the whole been managed, that none, save the officers of the various staffs, knew what was coming. While each look was turned, then, towards the *barrière* in astonishment, gradually the waggon rolled on, another followed, and another. These were, however, but the ambulances of the hospitals; and now the wounded themselves came in sight, a white flag—that well-known signal—waving in front of each waggon, while a guard of honour, consisting of picked men of the different regiments, rode at either side. One loud cheer—a shout echoed back from the Tuileries itself—rang out, as the soldiers saw their brave companions restored to them once more. With that impulse which, even in discipline, French soldiers never forget, the men rushed forward to the waggons, and in a moment officers and men were in the arms of their comrades. What a scene it was to see the poor and wasted forms, mangled by shot and maimed of limb, brightening up again, as home and friends surrounded them—to hear their faint voices mingle with the questions for this one or for that, while the fate of some brave fellow met but one word in elegy! On they passed—a sad train, but full of glorious memories. There were the grenadiers of Oudinot, who carried the Russian centre; eleven waggons were filled with their wounded. Here come the *voltigeurs* of Bernadotte's brigade. See how the fellows preserve their ancient repute, cheering and laughing; ever the

same, whether roystering at midnight in the Faubourg St. Antoine, or rushing madly upon the ranks of the enemy. There are the dragoons of Nansouty, who charged the Imperial Guard of Russia. See the proud line that floats on their banner, 'All wounded by the sabre.' And here come the cuirassiers of the Guard, with a detachment of their own as escort. How splendidly they look in the bright sun, and how proudly they come! As I looked, the Emperor rode forward bareheaded; his whole staff uncovered.—"Chapeau bas, messieurs!" said he, in a loud voice, 'Honour to the brave in misfortune!' Just then the escort halted, and I heard a laugh in front, close to where the Emperor was standing; but, from the crowded staff around him, could not see what was going forward.

"What is it?" said I, curious to learn the least incident of the scene.

"Advance a pace or two, captain," said the young officer I addressed; 'you can see it all.'

"I did so, and then beheld—oh, with what delight and surprise!—my poor friend Ploche, seated on the driving-seat of a gun, with his hand in salute as the Emperor spoke to him.

"Thou wilt not have promotion, nor a pension—what, then, can I do for thee?" said Napoleon, smiling. 'Hast any friend in the service whom I could advance for thy sake?'

"Yes, *parbleu!*" said Ploche, scratching his forehead, with a sort of puzzle and confusion which even the Emperor smiled at; 'I have a friend; but mayhap those wouldn't like—'

"Ask me for nothing thou thinkest I could not, ought not to grant," said the Emperor sternly. 'What is't now?'

"The poor corporal seemed thoroughly nonplussed, and for a second or two could not reply. At last, as if summoning all his courage for the effort, he said,—'Well, thou canst but refuse, and then the fault will be all thine; she is a brave girl, and had she been a man—'

"Whom can he mean!" said Napoleon. 'Is the man's head wandering?'

"No, *mon général*—all right there; that shell has turned many a sabre's edge. I was talking of Minette, the *vivandière* of ours. If thou art so bent

on doing me a service, why, promote her, and thou'lt make the whole regiment proud of it.'

"This speech was lost in the laugh which, beginning with the Emperor, extended to the staff, and at last to all the bystanders.

"Dost wish I should make her one of my aides-de-camp?" said Napoleon, still laughing.

"*Parbleu!* thou hast more ill-favoured ones among them," said Ploche, with a significant look at the grim faces of Rapp and Daru, whose hard and weather-beaten features never deigned a smile, while every other face was moved in laughter.

"But thou hast not said, yet, what I am to do," rejoined the Emperor.

"Thou used not to be so hard to understand," grumbled out Ploche; 'I have seen the time thou'd have said, "Is it Minette that was wounded at the Adige?—is that the girl stood in the square at Marengo?" *Parbleu!* I'll give her the cross of the Legion!'"

"And she shall have it, Corporal Ploche," said Napoleon, as he detached the decoration he wore on the breast of his coat. 'Give the order for the *vivandière* to advance.'

"Scarce were the words spoken, when the sound of a horse pressed to his speed was heard, and, mounted upon a small but showy Arab, a present from the regiment, Minette rode up. In the bloom of health, and flushed by exercise and the excitement of the moment, I never saw her look so handsome. Reigning in her horse short, as she came in front of the Emperor, the animal reared up, almost straight, and pawed the air with his fore-legs, while she, with all the composure in life, raised her hand to her cap, and saluted the Emperor with an action the most easy and graceful.

"Thou hast some yonder," said Ploche, with a grim smile at the staff, 'would be sore puzzled to keep their saddles as well.'

"Minette," said the Emperor, while he gazed on her handsome features with evident pleasure, 'your name is well known to me for many actions of kindness and self-devotion; wear this cross of the Legion of Honour: you will not value it the less that, until now, it has been only worn by me. Whenever you

find one worthy to be your husband, Minette, I will charge myself with the dowry."

"Oh, sire," said the trembling girl, as she pressed the Emperor's fingers to her lips—"Oh, sire, is this real?"

"Yes, *parbleu!*" said Ploche, wiping a large tear from his eye as he spoke; "he can make thee be a man, and make me feel like a girl."

In this brilliant group of novels it would be difficult to award to any one an unconditional pre-eminence, for each has its points of inferiority, as well as of superiority to all the others; but in passing judgment on them as a whole, we do not hesitate to place them in the foremost rank of historico-romantic fiction. We know of no other books which combine, in an equally remarkable degree, wealth of wit, variety of incident and character, exciting and sustained interest, and finish in detail; and but for their defects of construction, they would undoubtedly procure for their author a position among writers of fiction which only one or two have surpassed.

From the novels which succeed this principal group nothing new is to be learned of Lever's genius and style. The interest of the earlier ones turns a good deal upon the strange social condition of Ireland, at a time when expiring feudalism maintained a sort of guerilla warfare against new laws and civilisation, and with a measure of success which astonishes us as we read of it, and remember that this state of things existed considerably less than a century ago. The barbaric splendour and hospitality of the chiefs; their reckless extravagance; their relations with their dependants; their fierce hatred of the Saxon rule, and treasonable correspondence with France; the machinery of secret societies; the counter-agencies of Government; the explosions of abortive plots, and the

brutalities and villanies of process-servers and informers—such materials are largely and most successfully drawn upon for picturesque and humorous effects; and at the same time we are often made to see, not by didactic exposition, but rather by suggestion and inference, how the theories of philanthropic *doctrinaires*, anxious for the amelioration of Ireland, have constantly proved futile, from their total disregard of past experience, and from their ignorance of the traditions and the instincts of the race whose welfare is in question.

The best of these books is unquestionably 'The Knight of Gwynne;' and we cannot mention it without calling attention to the character of the Knight himself—the most charming of Lever's delineations. He is the *beau-ideal* of a gentleman; high-bred, high-spirited, the very soul of honour and generosity, and with a kindly dignity that procures for him universal love and respect. In every testing circumstance his character is perfectly consistent. Good and gracious, and more than lovable, in prosperity, he meets adversity with an equal spirit, and steers, through a sea of troubles, the pure, unselfish course of a noble-minded man. Reduced to poverty in his old age, he returns to the military service, in which his youth had been passed, and we find him—as we should have expected—a Bayard, altogether *sans peur et sans reproche*. Compelled to mingle with coarse associates, he maintains his dignity, but never loses his urbanity. How chastened is his wit! how we feel the charm of it, amid the keener sallies of the professed *causeurs*! How silvery sounds his laughter amid the loud-mouthed guffaws of convivial "counsellors" and squires! What a ring of truth and honour and kindness there is in all his

words! what a stamp of knightly purity on all his actions!

To have formed such a conception does infinite honour to the author: to have worked it out consistently is in itself a certificate of character.

In Lever's latest works we see the marks of his foreign residence; and the never-absent Irish element is frequently flavoured with the experiences of modern Continental life. His own personal connection with the Foreign Office is also freely utilised, and that august department sometimes not very reverentially dealt with; excellent fun being made of its red-tapism, and of the mock mystery and pedantic assumption of the smaller officials of "the line." Any one of these novels, taken by itself, would suffice to make a respectable reputation; and although none of them is equal to any of those we have minutely discussed, yet they are full of talent and interest, and, taken as a whole, very worthy successors. Here and there, indeed, they display considerably more constructive ability, and the higher female characters are often more easily and naturally drawn—Julia L'Estrange in 'The Bramleighs' for instance, and Nina Costalergi in 'Lord Kilgobbin,' although the latter verges on the extravagant, are superior to most of his early female delineations; but these partial advances do not compensate for the absence of that *vivida vis* so conspicuous in his most popular achievements, nor does any improvement in constructive skill carry him, in any case, the length of a perfectly skilful and artistic conclusion.

Among his works of fiction there are yet two which demand a separate mention, not merely on account of their merits, but also because they can be classed with no other group of his novels, differing as they

do from all of them in form, as well as in many other characteristics. These are 'The Confessions of Arthur O'Leary' and 'The Dodd Family Abroad.' The former purports to be an account of the adventures of a gentleman seeking upon the world's highways the occupation and happiness of his life. It cannot be discussed or judged as a novel—for a novel it neither is nor pretends to be; it is rather a series of unconnected sketches of Continental life, very full of incident and interest, and none the less a favourable exposition of the author's excellences that it does not hamper him with nice constructive considerations. All the social phases of the well-known watering-places—such as Spa, Ems, Wiesbaden, &c.—are most graphically depicted in it; and the *habitués* of these localities are set before us with a fidelity that secures instant recognition. Folly, absurdity, pretentiousness, and rascality, are nowhere more rampant than in such scenes; and Lever's descriptive powers are famously exercised on them all in this book, which also displays to advantage his satiric vein and his knowledge of mankind. He has described with remarkable power the terrible "play fever," not omitting to illustrate a single emotion which affects its delirious victims; and he has analysed and exposed the great plunder-confederacy of the Kursaal in all its gradations—from the deliberative to the executive; from the "gentleman" who retains his footing in society and concocts his villainies behind the scenes, to the *cæroc* with whom he is in secret league, who works out his ideas and shares the spoil with him.

Lever and Thackeray both excelled in sketches of this sort, but in the works of the latter we know of nothing equal in this way to what this book and 'The Dodd

Family' contain. Arthur O'Leary has experiences and makes confessions on all sorts of other subjects,—notably on German student-life—but the *Kursaal* sketches are the most remarkable. The whole book abounds in epigram, and is lighted up with innumerable flashes of that serio-comic philosophy in which Lever delighted; the humour, too, is finer, the fun more chastened, than in many of his works of fiction, and the writing is remarkably polished and excellent throughout. Altogether we rank these 'Confessions' very high among the author's best efforts; and seriously recommend the book for reperusal to those with whom it is not a recent experience.

'The Dodd Family'—so well known as hardly to require description—is full of all sorts of cleverness, fun, wit, wisdom, and extravagant absurdity. The fundamental idea is a happy one, and, in Lever's hands, could scarcely fail to be worked out to a success. "The Dodds" are the family of a moderate Irish squire, who, partly from embarrassed circumstances, partly from ambitious motives, leave their paternal halls of Dodsborough, and go to foreign parts in search of economy, pleasure, and high society. We learn how they prosper in these quests from the correspondence of various members of the family, whose letters, indeed, constitute the book, which tells its story entirely in the epistolary form, giving us often two or three very different versions of the same event, according to the views and characters of the different narrators.

The family is divided into cliques, each clique—each individual indeed—seeking some personal object, with indifference to the wishes and interests of the domestic commonwealth. Mr. Dodd himself, supported by his younger daughter, has

semi-despairing aspirations after economy; but Mrs. Dodd despises it in theory, and her elderly daughter and her son, sharing her sentiments, help her to carry them into practice with ruinous results.

Dodd *père*, again, has an honest contempt for false pretences, and is satisfied with his own identity—his daughter Caroline sympathising with him in this respect also; but Dodd *mère* and Dodd *fil*s and Miss Mary Anne Dodd, soaring beyond the prosaic confines of fact, stick at nothing in the way of bragging and assumption, and are quite equal to deliberate falsehood in the pursuit of what they consider social advancement. Hence civil war rages perpetually in the domestic circle, and a series of social and financial checks and counter-checks marks the relations of the family with its head; and some of the best of the fun springs from the episodes of this ludicrous warfare. On every hand the Dodds fall among thieves, and become the dupes of false pretenders to rank and fortune. A swindler has only to style himself "Count" or "Baron" to secure their confidence and enrich himself at their expense. Every kind of Continental scoundrelism is exhibited as preying upon them, and their own efforts to overreach and deceive—in which, from his ignorance of the language, Dodd *père* is often an unconscious accomplice—recoil upon themselves with a tenfold retribution.

The motives of Mrs. Dodd and her following are far from being innocent; they would dupe and deceive if they could; but they are foolish Hibernian bunglers, and have no chance of success as amateurs among the astute professors of the high arts of knavery and imposture who surround them.

Poor Paterfamilias himself has no wish or intention to do wrong; his

honest desire is to live quietly and make ends meet; but he is for ever being compromised by his family; and what with extricating himself and them from scrapes of hourly recurrence, what with providing the sinews of war from a ruined Irish estate, he has an unenviable time of it. Mrs. Dodd, as he complains, is a regular storm-bird; wherever she goes, she carries her own hurricane with her, and the consequent loss and damage have to be made good by her lord. Yet, with the elasticity of his race, he can throw his troubles to the winds, and enjoy himself in the lulls of the tempests; though he sees breakers ahead, he can take his ease till the crash comes, and when matters are at the very worst, he can contemplate his own calamities with a humorous gusto. In these and in all other respects he is consistently Irish throughout; his shrewdness is as national as the blundering simplicity which neutralises it; and his wit is as much a product of the Green Isle as is his tendency to employ it at what we should consider inappropriate junctures. Mrs. Dodd is really a monster: her follies and extravagances suffocate us with laughter; but we feel that our mirth would be pleasanter if she were not so utterly heartless. From the form of the book, it is natural that it should be lengthy; but this is not a fault, for it does not require to be read continuously, like a story with a regular plot; and indeed, from its abundant and even incessant fun, its merits will be better appreciated by a more regular perusal. Like the 'Pickwick Papers,' one can take it up and open it anywhere at random, with the certainty of finding amusement, for there is not a dull page in it from beginning to end. Dodd *père* frequently indulges in a vein of social and political philosophy, which, if a little incongruously at-

tributed to him, is none the less interesting and instructive. His views on Irish questions and on Continental customs, institutions, and politics, are full of sagacity, constantly set forth with the raciest humour; and, in fact, we have in them a pretty distinct foretaste of the lucubrations of Cornelius O'Dowd.

The mention of that celebrated *nom de plume* will recall to the regretful recollection of our readers that they have seen the last of those brilliant essays which, from time to time, during the past nine years, Lever contributed to this Magazine. We are very conscious of the loss which we sustain by their cessation; it is indeed as irreparable as the loss of the man himself; for these contributions were as unique as the genius which produced them, and we may safely say that we shall never see their like again. We are aware that their unpretending tone and fugitive shape, as well as their brightness and fun, are sufficient to satisfy the solemn stupidities that there is nothing in them; and, indeed, they were not intended for such intellectual pachyderms, who can only be affected by the weight of a ponderous style, and are impervious to the light and polished shafts of genius; but all who are not afflicted with the same obtuseness must keenly relish the crisp, epigrammatic *causeries* of Cornelius O'Dowd, and appreciate the veritable Attic salt which seasons his speculations "on men and women, and other things in general." It is not often that wisdom and knowledge condescend to address the public in the undogmatic tone of polite conversation; nor is it often that wit and humour are made to subserve the exposition of serious truth and grave experience with complete propriety; but Lever has achieved these things in the "O'Dowderies," and displayed, albeit in the modest garb of something

like a *jeu d'esprit*, much of his intellectual wealth, and all his knowledge of men and affairs. There is consummate art in the way he subdues the didactic and argumentative tone commonly employed in the discussion of social and political questions; in the way he brings us by a few light touches—*per saltum*, as it were—to his conclusions, and carefully excludes from view anything suggestive of excogitation and labour. There is, moreover, immense evidence of power in all this; just as the athlete's strength is most clearly indicated when his feats of agility are performed with a lightness and grace that draw off our attention from the effort which it costs to achieve them.

Thus we seldom rise from the perusal of one of these papers without finding that we have acquired new ideas or more distinct impressions on some subject of the day, not only without trouble, but with all the feeling of having been engaged in a pastime rather than occupied with a serious study.

The constant and happy use of metaphors and parables; the logical accuracy of the parallel cases cited in illustration; the humour which plays so lightly about his utterances; and the perfect ease and finish of a style in which all the author's graces as a writer are compiled, produce this result, and for once shake our belief in the adage, that "there is no royal road to learning." We see in these essays the strongest proof of that versatility which we have already discussed as one of Lever's characteristics; for, dealing with the prominent subjects of public interest at home and abroad, as they arose, he has treated them all with equal facility, and touched nothing without adorning it. We see in them, also, the clearest evidence of his insight into human character, for we have been enabled to test,

by the light of subsequent events, the accuracy of his judgments herein incidentally pronounced upon the leading politicians of the world; and that accuracy cannot, in scarcely one instance, be gainsaid.

And if we wanted fresh proofs of the straightforward manliness and geniality of the man, here we have them in abundance; for though Cornelius O'Dowd's political convictions were as distinct as possible—though he wrote himself uncompromisingly "a Tory"—his partisanship was perfectly honest and generous. Disdaining subterfuge and equivocation in defence, he scorned, in attack, anything like a distortion of facts or an unjust innuendo; and the blows which he struck, though sufficiently damaging, never gave his opponents cause to complain that they had been taken at an unfair advantage.

A political partisan who keenly advocates his own views, can scarcely fail to make enemies for himself, particularly if humour and satire are among the weapons in his armory; but Lever's warfare was conducted with such frank geniality and candour, with such an unwillingness to impute evil motives to his adversaries where the imputation could not be supported by the most patent facts, that we can confidently assert that he has left behind him not a single ill-wisher.

As we can have no more "O'Dowderies," the best thing we can do is to turn what we have got to the best account; and we are persuaded that a judicious selection of the less ephemeral essays, if published in a separate form, would be an acceptable permanent addition to the libraries of cultivated and thoughtful people, forming a repertory of social and political truths, a source of intelligent amusement, and a graceful and correct model of style.

We have now discussed, at greater length than was perhaps warrantable, and with an imperfection of which we are very conscious, the various elements of Lever's genius, and the varied expression which they have found in his works.

On proposing to ourselves to make this analysis, we confess to having found our recollections of his writings not quite clear enough to warrant us in resting such a process upon it, so that reperusal, to some considerable extent, became a necessity. At the close of this pleasant task, we find that a critical revision has more than confirmed the favourable prepossession with which we addressed ourselves to it; and that the more closely Lever's work is examined, the higher is the conception which is formed of his intellect. If his books were, as some small critics have ventured to assert, the mere literature of animal spirits, this would not have been the case; for, though the glitter of a lively style may satisfy or delude the superficial reader, the careful student looks below such adventitious attractions; just as the surgeon, in judging of the physical symmetry of a man, takes no heed of the clothing which envelopes his body, and pays only a secondary attention to acquired tricks of attitude and movement. As we cannot pay a higher tribute to a man's social qualities than to say of him that the better he is known the more he is liked; so no greater compliment can be offered to an artist than to pronounce of his works that a careful analysis only serves to discover new merits in them. And this tribute we can honestly pay to Lever.

We have already hinted that his writings suggest the possession of powers even higher than those which they actually display—that his is a case where the man is

greater than his work; and from this point of view he appears to us to occupy a place in the very foremost rank of the great intellects which have reflected glory on this country. We are not afflicted with the *gout de comparaison*; we are not going to pronounce him superior to this man or inferior to that other; and even if we wished to do so, we know of no one between whom and him a comparison could be legitimately established: we shall content ourselves with saying that, whether his genius be measured by its actual outcome, or judged under the guidance of a less direct deduction, we are satisfied that among the greatest he is very great indeed.

To direct man's sad eyes to the sunnier aspects of life; to divert an unimaginative age from too incessant a contemplation of the practical; to confront the selfish with models of disinterestedness; to rebuke base motives by the exhibition of heroic standards; to teach lessons of wisdom, albeit with a smiling face; and to charm the taste by the creations of a poetic fancy—this is what Lever has sought to do, this he has succeeded in doing; and always under the direction of a clear heart and a manly nature, so that nothing can be learned from his pages but what is upright and chivalrous and good, nothing that will not tend to teach us to make our lives nobler and more unselfish. It would be difficult to overrate the value of such a function so employed; it would be difficult to award too high a meed of praise to such an artist. The works of such a man are worthy of a manly and virtuous nation, and in them a high-spirited and generous youth will find inspirations befitting their race. Long may his name flourish among us; for while it is in repute, virtue and manliness shall not have altogether died out of the land.

LIFE OF MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

In our view of the French Revolution, the violence of the torrent then loosed has always seemed less wonderful than the exceeding weakness of the dam. Why on earth did people submit?

The germ of an answer to this question may perhaps be discovered in the little book which M. de Lasteyrie has so well translated for us. "Submit yourselves humbly to the will of God;" "obey the laws of your country." Yes, yes, but—so complex is life!—it may be shown that an undue and mistaken observance of these principles was the very evil which unchained the hellhounds of the French Revolution. There is no greater mistake than that of imagining that the Reign of Terror was a time of incessant mob-rule and turbulence. It was really from the want of a little healthy turbulence, and the utter absence of any such thing as a good, honest, indignant mob, that the continuance of the "Reign" was made possible. This is easily shown. When the whole power of the State has been suffered to fall into the hands of murderers, it necessarily becomes the duty of the good to rise up against crime—that is, against the law of the land; and in such case, like any other insurgents, they must look to their means of action. Having on their side character, property, and overwhelming numbers, the enemies of "the Terror" were endowed with great elements of strength, but they had to encounter a formidable antagonist—that is, an executive government which was

legally armed with the power to kill whomsoever it chose; and, besides combination and valour, they were grievously in need of opportunity. They wanted some interruption of the awful calm—some fight, some *row*, some disturbance—in order that, as soldiers say, they might be able to "rally upon it." For months and months—nay, indeed, during nearly two years—they found no such occasion. Everywhere submission, submission, submission, corresponding and more than corresponding to the triple audacity of Danton.* The men "nowhere," as our turf people say; the women devoutly resigned.

With the aid of Monsieur de Lasteyrie's volume, observe a great noble's town-house in the early days of the Terror. An affray caused by some angry porters at the gate of the Hotel de Noailles, might have become the nucleus of a victorious onset, closely followed by a blessed deliverance; but then an affray was just what did *not* happen, and was not even probable. The law reigned. If you are not afraid of being denounced by some spy as the associate of "aristocrats," you can enter the building. There, when in strict privacy with some members of the great historic house of Noailles, you surely will see the germ of resistance to organised murder. Not at all. You will see two brave, noble, and high-hearted women—one charmingly attractive—recommending each other to prepare for death, with a priest contriving the disguise in which he will make bold to at-

Life of Madame de Lafayette, by Madame de Lasteyrie, her Daughter; preceded by the Life of the Duchesse d'Ayen, by Madame de Lafayette, her daughter. Translated from the French by Louis de Lasteyrie. Paris, Léon Techener, Rue de l'Arbre-Sec, 53: London, Barthes & Lowell, 14 Great Marlborough Street. 1872.

* Ce qu'il nous faut c'est de l'audace, et encore de l'audace, et toujours de l'audace.

tend their execution; and this, mark, about a *year* before the time when the victims who thus prepared themselves for the knife of the slaughterer were really thrown into prison.

It was owing to their own "faults of temper," as the conjugal phrase goes, and not to the prowess of adversaries, that the butchers at length succumbed. Good men loathing murder had no part at all in the conflict which preceded the end of "the Terror." Robespierre himself was the man who (from overreaching ambition, or from hatred or dread of his brother-terrorists) rose up (with the Commune at his back) against the more blood-thirsty members of the Committee, and it was only in the confusion resulting from the victory of men worse than he was, that honest people at last found courage to interpose.

Until the end thus came, the submissiveness of France knew no bounds. The Reign of Terror was also the Reign of Law. Every scoundrel who sat round the green table in the Committee of Public Safety, and agreed to the daily list of victims, was as amply invested with legal authority as any grand-juryman who brings in a "true bill" at our English assizes. The scaffold reeked, but the women—bringing their work with them—who came every day to see "Madame Guillotine" fed, could at least say that from the cutting of the hair of the victims to the removal of their bodies and the baskets containing their heads, the whole proceeding was strictly legal, and sanctioned besides by universal suffrage. Paris was quiet. Order reigned. Never, perhaps, was the law so respected.

But what is the meaning of all this? Were people all madly wicked? Not at all. Only a few were wicked; the rest were cowed. *Cowed!* A whole people,

a brave people cowed? Well, the explanation seems to be this: The executions began, continued, increased in number, and therefore, of course—in one sense—it was by the will of God that they took place. Then, again, they were ordained by the law of the land. These two considerations so effectually reinforced the selfish motives which inclined men to shrink from the immediate danger of resistance, that there resulted that fatal guilt which has been the cause of so much evil in France—the guilt of Resignation.

Our French critics may tell us that we too—and that very lately—have incurred this kind of disgrace—the disgrace of guilty acquiescence. When the rioters, some five years ago, were in possession of Hyde Park, Parliament was sitting, and Mr. Gladstone was the leader of the Opposition. It was plainly incumbent upon him to stand up in his place and say that in the duty of maintaining order the Government would be as firmly supported by his side of the House as by their own accustomed adherents. He remained silent—guiltily silent; but we imagine that his error arose from an impassioned desire for the recovery of office, and a consequent unwillingness to run the least risk of losing popular favour. In that view his delinquency should be carefully remembered against him; but it was, after all, a sin of ambition, and not one importing that fatal resignation which we have ventured to ascribe to the French.

Whatever counterbalancing merits may be reckoned in defence of the Faith, it seems impossible to doubt that this selfish vice, the vice of guilty resignation, is diligently taught by the Roman Catholic Church, and taught unhappily with a success which does not attend its other and more-moral efforts. What makes

the matter worse is, the people with the best natural dispositions and the most lively consciences are precisely those who are the most surely corrupted and demoralised by religion thus misapplied. The very men who, by their station, their character, and their natural goodness of heart, might seem to be the best qualified to stand by their country in her hour of trial, are more than all others exposed to this moral palsy. If Hampden had been a good Roman Catholic, he would have paid his ship-money.

Considering the known bravery of the French race, we used always to marvel at the decision taken by the nobles who emigrated when threatened by the dangers of the Revolution; but some part at least of the required explanation is furnished by the circumstances of their having been bred up as Roman Catholics. It might have seemed that, in their gay brilliant time at Versailles, they were free enough from the sway of religion; but they were all men who had been piously taught in the days of their childhood; and when the hour of danger came, the fatal lesson of resignation which they had received in their early days refastened itself upon their minds, and concurred with their selfish fears in inducing them to shrink from the duty they owed to their country. Besides, the brilliant vigour of the women in France has an incalculable effect in inspiring the courage and enterprise of the men; and if the "better half"—the by far better half—of the nation becomes so piously desponding of human resources as to be preparing for death, there must be imminent danger of a collapse on the part of the men. When French regiments go into action,

they like to be led by a woman; * but who would expect great achievements from the men of a Zouave battalion if the neat-footed vivandière who so prettily marches at their head were to begin prematurely despairing of victory, and crying out for a priest?

The working of this poison—the poison which the French call "clerical"—is exemplified in the little book now before us. We there see the pious and blameless "variety" of the "grande dame" practising every virtue, and coming after all to the scaffold with angelic sweetness; no fathers, no husbands, no sons, no lovers throwing any sort of impediment in the way of all this organised murder; and by the time we have finished the volume, we begin to understand how the divine lesson of resignation to the will of God may be taught and taught and taught by priests till it ends in producing resignation to the will of demons.

The lives of both the Duchesse d'Ayen and the Marquise de la Fayette are written in so pious, or rather in so "clerical," a spirit, as to be absolutely colourless, and it is from their general tenor rather than from any particular passage that we have been able to deduce our conclusions. The lives, in truth, are so written that it would be more fitting to read them on a Sunday than to quote them on the other six days; but the narrative of the good priest Carrichon is extremely interesting, and we give it almost entire. We do this the more readily because the kind, zealous, devoted man tells us how he was able to grant absolution under circumstances strange and terrible.

"The Maréchal de Noailles, † the Duchesse d'Ayen her daughter-in-law,

* At Inkerman the 2d battalion of the 3d Zouaves went into the fight headed gallily by its vivandière. She was killed.

† She was by birth a Cossé-Brissac. Her advanced age had impaired her faculties.

and the Vicomtesse de Noailles her grand-daughter, were detained prisoners in their own house, from November 1793 till April 1794. The first I only knew by sight, but was well acquainted with the two others, whom I generally visited once a-week. Terror and crime were increasing together; victims were becoming more numerous. One day, as the ladies were exhorting each other to prepare for death, I said to them, as by foresight: *If you go to the scaffold, and if God gives me strength to do so, I shall accompany you.* They took me at my word, and eagerly exclaimed, *Will you promise to do so?* For one moment I hesitated. *Yes, I replied; and so that you may easily recognize me, I shall wear a dark-blue coat and a red waistcoat.* Since then they often reminded me of my promise.

"In the month of April 1794, during Easter week, they were all three conveyed to the Luxembourg. I had frequent accounts of them through M. Grellet,* whose delicate attentions and zealous services were of such use both to them and to their children. I was often reminded of my promise. On the 27th of June, on a Monday or a Friday, he came to beg of me to fulfil the engagement I had taken with the Maréchal de Mouchy and his wife.

"I went to the 'Palais de Justice,' and succeeded in entering the court. I stood very near, with my eyes fixed upon them, during a quarter of an hour. M. and Mme. de Mouchy, whom I had only seen once at their own house, and whom I knew better than they knew me, could not distinguish me in the crowd. God inspired me, and with His help I did all I could for them. The Maréchal was singularly edifying, and prayed aloud with all his heart. The day before, on leaving the Luxembourg, he had said to those who had given him marks of sympathy: 'At seventeen years of age I mounted the breach for my King; at seventy-seven I ascend the scaffold for my God; my friends, I am not to be pitted.' I avoid details, which would become interminable. That day I thought it useless to go as far as the guillotine; besides, my courage failed me. This was ominous for the fulfilment of the promise I

had made to their relations, who were thrown into the deepest affliction by this catastrophe. They had all been confined in the same prison, and had thus been of great comfort to each other.

"On the 22d of July (1794), on a Tuesday,† between eight and ten o'clock in the morning, I was just going out; I heard a knock. I opened the door, and saw the Noailles children with their tutor. The children were cheerful, as is usually the case at that age, but under their merriment was concealed a sadness of heart caused by their recent losses and by their fears for the future; the tutor looked sad, careworn, pale, and haggard: 'Let us go to your study,' he said, 'and leave the children in this room.' We did so. He threw himself on a chair. 'All is over, my friend,' he said; 'the ladies are before the Revolutionary Tribunal. I summon you to keep your word. I shall take the boys to Vincennes to see little Euphémie.‡ While in the wood I shall prepare these unfortunate children for their terrible loss.'

"Although I had long been prepared for this news, I was greatly shocked. The frightful situation of the parents, of the children, of their worthy tutor, that youthful mirth so soon to be followed by such misery; poor little Euphémie, then only four years old, all these thoughts rushed upon my mind. But I soon recovered myself, and after a few questions, and answers full of mournful details, I said to M. Grellet: 'You must go now, and I must change my dress. What a task I have before me! Pray that God may give me strength to accomplish it.' We arose, and found the children innocently amusing themselves, looking gay and happy. The sight of them, the thought of their unconsciousness of what they were so soon to learn, and of the interview which would follow with their little sister, rendered the contrast more striking, and almost broke my heart. Left alone after their departure, I felt terrified and exhausted. 'My God, have pity on them and on me!' I exclaimed. I changed my clothes and went to two or three places. With a heavy load on my heart, I turned my

* Tutor to Alexis and Alfred de Noailles, sons of the Vicomtesse de Noailles.

† 4 Thermidor.

‡ Their sister, Mme. de Vénec.

steps towards the 'Palais de Justice,' between one and two o'clock in the afternoon. I tried to get in, but found it impossible. I made inquiries of a person who had just left the tribunal. I still doubted the truth of the news which had been told me. But the answer destroyed all illusion and all hope; I could doubt no longer. Once more I went on my way, and turned my steps towards the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. What thoughts, what agitation, what secret terrors distracted my poor brain! I opened my heart to a friend whom I could trust, and who, speaking to me in God's name, strengthened my courage. At his house I took some coffee, which seemed to relieve my head.

"Thoughtful and irresolute, I slowly retraced my steps towards the 'Palais de Justice,' dreading to get there, and hoping not to find those whom I was seeking. I arrived before five o'clock. There were no signs of departure. Sick at heart, I ascended the steps of the 'Sainte Chapelle,' then I walked into the *Grande Salle*, and wandered about. I sat down, I rose again, but spoke to no one. From time to time I cast a melancholy glance towards the courtyard, to see if there were any signs of departure. My constant thought was that in two hours, perhaps in one, they would be no more. I cannot say how overwhelmed I was by that idea, which has affected me through life on all such occasions, and they have only been too frequent. While a prey to these mournful feelings, never did an hour appear to me so long or so short as the one which elapsed between five and six o'clock on that day. Conflicting thoughts were incessantly crossing my mind, which made me suddenly pass from the illusions of vain hope to fears, alas! too well founded. At last I saw, by a movement in the crowd, that the prison door was on the point of being opened. I went down and placed myself near the outer gate, as for the previous fortnight it had become impossible to enter the prison yard. The first cart was filled with prisoners, and came towards me. It was occupied by eight ladies, whose demeanour was most edifying. Of these seven were unknown to me. The last, who was very near me, was the *Maréchale de Noailles*. A transient ray of hope crossed my mind when I saw that her daughter-in-law and her

grand-daughter were not with her; but, alas! they were in the second cart.

"Mme. de Noailles was in white; she did not appear more than twenty-four years of age: Mme. d'Ayen, who looked about forty, wore a dress striped blue and white. Six men got in after them. I was pleased to see the respectful distance at which the two first placed themselves, so as to leave more liberty to the ladies. They were scarcely seated when the mother became the object of that tender solicitude for which her daughter was well known."

In the heart-rending scene which follows, the good priest was too far away from the carts containing the victims to be able to hear what they said; but whilst gazing in his agony at the angelic Mme. de Noailles, and happily catching her eye, he was able, as it were, to see her speak, and nothing can be more touching, or more tenderly beautiful, than the words she seemed to utter. Let us add that those words lose nothing by passing into the exquisite English in which M. de Lasteyrie has translated them. We may be unduly proud of our language, but certainly we imagine that these words, as rendered by M. de Lasteyrie, are even more touching than the original French. The narrative goes on:—

"I heard it said near me, 'Look at that young one, how anxious she seems! see how she is speaking to the other one!' For my part, I felt as if I heard all they were saying. *Mama, he is not there.—Look again.—Nothing escapes me; I assure you, mama, he is not there.*

"They had evidently forgotten that I had sent them word that it would be impossible for me to gain admittance into the prison yard. The first cart stopped before me during at least a quarter of an hour. It moved on; the second followed. I approached the ladies; they did not see me. I went again into the 'Palais de Justice,' and then a long way round, and stood at the entrance of the 'Pont-au-Change,' in a

prominent place. Mme. de Noailles cast her eyes around her; she passed, and did not see me. I followed the carts over the bridge, and thus kept near the ladies, though separated from them by the crowd. Mme. de Noailles, still looking for me, did not perceive me. Mme. d'Ayen's anxiety became visible on her countenance. Her daughter watched the crowd with increasing attention, but in vain. I felt tempted to turn back. Have I not done all that I could? I inwardly exclaimed. Everywhere the crowd will be greater; it is useless to go any further. I was on the point of giving up the attempt. Suddenly the sky became overclouded, thunder was heard in the distance; I made a fresh effort. A short cut brought me before the arrival of the carts to the Rue Saint-Antoine, nearly opposite the too famous 'Force.' At that moment the storm broke forth. The wind blew violently; flashes of lightning and claps of thunder followed in rapid succession; the rain poured down in torrents. I took shelter at a shop-door. The spot is always present to my memory, and I have never passed by it since without emotion. In one moment the street was cleared: the crowd had taken refuge in the shops and gateways. There was less order in the procession, both the escort and the carts having quickened their pace. They were close to the 'Petit Saint-Antoine,' and I was still undecided. The first cart passed. By a precipitate and involuntary movement I quitted the shop-door, rushed towards the second cart, and found myself close to the ladies. Mme. de Noailles perceived me, and, smiling, seemed to say: *There you are at last! How happy we are to see you! How we have looked for you! Mama, there he is!* Mme. d'Ayen appeared to revive. As for myself, all irresolution vanished from my mind. By the grace of God I felt possessed of extraordinary courage. Soaked with rain and perspiration, I continued to walk by them. On the steps of the church of Saint Louis I met a friend who, filled with respect and attachment for the ladies, was endeavouring to give them the same assistance. His countenance, his attitude, showed what he felt. I placed my hand on his shoulder, and,

shuddering, said, 'Good evening, my dear friend.'

"The storm was at its height. The wind blew tempestuously, and greatly annoyed the ladies in the first cart, more especially the Maréchale de Noailles. With her hands tied behind her, with no support for her back, she tottered on the wretched plank upon which she was placed. Her large cap fell back and exposed to view some grey hairs. Immediately, a number of people, who were gathered there notwithstanding the rain, having recognised her, she became the sole object of their attention. They added by their insults to the sufferings she was enduring so patiently. 'There she is, that Maréchale who used to go about with so many attendants, driving in such fine coaches: there she is in the cart, just like the others!' The shouts continued, the sky became darker, the rain fell heavier still. We were close to the *carrefour*, preceding the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. I went forward, examined the spot, and said to myself, This the place for granting them what they so much long for.

"The cart was going slower. I turned towards the ladies, and made a sign which Mme. de Noailles understood perfectly. *Mama, M. Carrichon is going to give us absolution*, she evidently whispered. They piously bowed their heads with a look of repentance, contrition, and hope. Then I lifted up my hand, and, without uncovering my head, pronounced the form of absolution, and the words which follow it, very distinctly, and with supernatural attention. Never shall I forget the expression of their faces. From that moment the storm abated, the rain diminished, and seemed only to have fallen for the furtherance of our wishes. I offered up my thanks to God, and so did, I am sure, these pious women. Their exterior appearance spoke contentment, security, and joy."

Here, then, was absolution not preceded by any confession which can be called "auricular," and given, besides, by the priest whilst standing disguised in a crowd; but we believe it is not doubted in the

Roman Catholic Church that the deviation from the usual practice had a sound warrant in the necessity of the case, and that the absolution was valid. The narrative goes on:—

"As we advanced through the 'Faubourg,' the rain having ceased, a curious multitude again lined the two sides of the street, insulting the ladies in the first cart, but above all the Maréchale. Nothing was said to the others. I sometimes walked by the side of the carts, and sometimes preceded them.

"At last we reached the fatal spot. I cannot describe what I felt. What a moment! What a separation! What an affliction for the children, husbands, sisters, relations, and friends who are to survive those beloved ones in this valley of tears! There they are before me full of health, and in one moment I shall see them no more. What anguish! yet not without deep consolation at beholding them so resigned.

"We came in sight of the scaffold. The carts stopped, and were immediately surrounded by the soldiers. A ring of numerous spectators was soon formed, most of whom were laughing and amusing themselves at the horrible sight. It was dreadful to be amongst them!

"While the executioner and his two assistants were helping the prisoners out of the first cart, Mme. de Noailles's eyes sought for me in the crowd. She caught sight of me. What a wonderful expression there was in those looks! Sometimes raised towards heaven, sometimes lowered towards earth; her eyes, so animated, so gentle, so expressive, so heavenly, were often fixed on me in a manner which would have attracted notice if those around me had had time for observation. I pulled my hat over my eyes without taking them off her. I felt as if I could hear her say, *Our sacrifice is accomplished! We have a firm and comforting hope that a merciful God is calling us to Him! How many dear to us we leave behind! but we shall forget no one. Farewell to them, and thanks to you! Jesus Christ, who died for us, is our strength. May we die*

in Him! Farewell. May we all meet again in heaven!

"It is impossible to give an idea of the animation and fervour of those signs, the eloquence of which was so touching that the bystanders exclaimed: 'Oh! that young woman, how happy she seems, how she looks up to heaven, how she is praying! But what is the use of it all?' And then, on second thoughts: 'Oh! the rascals, the bigots!'

"The mother and daughter took a last farewell of each other and descended from the cart. As for me, the outer world disappeared for a moment. At once broken-hearted and comforted, I could only return thanks to God for not having waited for this moment to give them absolution; or, which would have been still worse, delayed it till they had ascended the scaffold. We could not have joined in prayer while I gave, and they received, this great blessing, as we had been enabled to do in the most favourable circumstances possible at such a time. I left the spot where I was standing, and went over to the other side, while the victims were getting out. I found myself opposite the wooden steps which led to the scaffold. An old man, tall and straight, with white hair and a good-natured countenance, was leaning against it. I was told he was a *fermier-général*. Near him stood a very edifying lady, whom I did not know. Then came the Maréchale de Noailles, exactly opposite me, dressed in black, for she was still in mourning for her husband. She was sitting on a block of wood or stone which happened to be there, her large eyes fixed with a vacant look. I had not omitted to do for her what I had done for so many, and in particular for the Maréchal and Maréchale de Mouchy. All the others were drawn up in two lines, looking towards the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. From where I stood I could only perceive Mme. d'Ayen, whose attitude and countenance expressed the most sublime, unaffected, and devout resignation. She seemed only occupied with the sacrifice she was about to make to God, through the merits of the Saviour, His divine Son. She looked as she was wont to do when she had the happiness of approaching the altar for holy com-

munion. I shall never forget the impression she made on me at that moment. It is often in my thoughts. God grant that I may profit by it!

"The Maréchale de Noailles was the third person who ascended the scaffold. The upper part of her dress had to be cut away in order to uncover her throat. I was impatient to leave the place, but yet I wished to drink the cup of bitterness to the dregs, and to keep my promise, as God was giving me strength to do so, even in the midst of all my shuddering horror. Six ladies followed. Mme. d'Ayen was the tenth. How happy she seemed to die before her daughter! The executioner tore off her cap. As it was fastened by a pin which he had forgotten to remove, he pulled her hair violently, and the pain he caused was visible on her countenance.

"The mother disappeared, the daughter took her place. What a sight to behold that young creature, all in white, looking still younger than she really was, like a gentle lamb going to the slaughter! I fancied I was witnessing the martyrdom of one of the young virgins or holy women whom we read of in the history of the Church. What had happened to the mother also happened to her; the same pain in the removal of her cap, then the same composure and the same death. Oh! the abundant crimson stream that gushed from the head and neck! How happy she is now! I thought, as her body was thrown into the frightful coffin.

"May Almighty God in His mercy bestow on the members of that family all the blessings which I ask, and entreat them to ask for mine! May we all be saved with those who have gone before us to that happy dwelling where revolutions are unknown—to that abode which, according to the words of Saint Augustine, has Truth for its King, Charity for its law, and will endure for Eternity!"

The moral *we* draw is, that neither men nor women should be brought by priests or deacons into that state of mind which fits them to be trampled upon without resistance. Charlotte Corday was the superb exception; but in general, both by nature and habit, the Frenchman has always been but too well inclined to meet the approaches of tyranny with a shrug and "*que voulez vous?*" and it seems perverse in the extreme to aggravate this baneful weakness by applying to those who were only "*victims*," the grand appellation of "*martyrs*," and confusing the idea of submission to Heaven with that of submission to scoundrels.

J A P A N.

THERE is a country whose written history stretches in an uninterrupted tale over 2582 years; whose sovereigns have formed one unbroken dynasty since 660 B.C.; whose first ruler, of the still-reigning family, was contemporary with Nebuchadnezzar and Tullus Hostilius; whose present Emperor is the 122d of his race; whose principles of action have remained virtually unchanged for five-and-twenty centuries.

That country is Japan.

Even if it possessed no other merit than this extraordinary antiquity, such a country would deserve to be looked at with attention; but the manners and the character of its people are almost more striking than its ancient lineage; while the interest of the subject is still further increased by the strange fact that, after resolutely shutting itself out from all contact with the world, this country is now suddenly abandoning its traditions, is seeking to change its whole condition, is striving to adopt European laws and habits, and to take a place amongst the nations. A great Embassy, including some of the most illustrious of its nobles, has just landed in England, with the object of studying the elements of Western civilisation, and of applying them on its return. A sketch of the present condition of Japan may therefore be somewhat useful at this moment.

But in order to understand the situation as it now is, it is essential to trace its growth, and to indicate the causes which have produced it; for that purpose the main features of the history of this curious nation must be roughly recalled to memory. The Empire of Japan was definitely established more than six

hundred years before the Christian era by Zen Mou, who, as is shown by his first title of "Lord of the Narrow Country," was originally the petty chieftain of a mountain valley. It was he who founded the dynasty of the Mikados, and who invented the ingenious system of their deification after death, which, under the name of the religion of Sinto, or the Kamis, has been so powerful an agent in maintaining intact the prestige of his descendants. His successors seem to have had to do a vast deal of fighting, and though their half-sacred character generally prevented them from appearing personally in the field, their generals had plenty of occupation during some two thousand years; the reason being that their subjects, though strictly loyal, were particularly riotous, and indulged themselves in an indefinite quantity of local wars of the most varied kind. The majority of the Mikados during this long period have not left much mark in history, but some few of them were able statesmen and great rulers: the long catalogue of their doings offers, however, but little interest, until about six hundred years ago. All that is worth noticing in the interval is that the Mikados were very long-lived; that in 85 B.C. the Emperor of that day conferred on one of his sons the title of Shiogun or Generalissimo, and thereby unconsciously prepared the way for the extinction of the power of his family thirteen centuries afterwards; that one Buretz, who reigned about the time of Mahomet, carried cruelty to a height which it has rarely attained elsewhere, even amongst the most inventive torturers; for when he had grown tired of the insufficient

satisfaction of cutting his courtiers into small pieces, and of dissecting them alive, he conceived the new amusement of making them climb to the top of tall trees, which he forthwith cut down under them; that the introduction of Buddhism, towards the year 700, supplied a series of new motives for carrying on fighting, the partisans of the new faith disagreeing violently with the Shintoists, and of course settling their disputes by battle; and that the books of Confucius were imported at the end of the ninth century, but seemingly without producing any special quarrels.

But when the twelfth century began, new circumstances had arisen, and new events occurred, of a really important nature. Incessant fighting, and the disorders consequent upon it, had slowly developed the separate power of the Daimios or local nobles, who by degrees had grown to be virtually independent of the Mikado. They still remained under his nominal command—they paid him tribute, and received from him investiture; but in reality they had each of them acquired royal rights in their respective provinces. They made war on their own account, administered justice in their own names, coined money, levied taxes, and had power of life and death over the population of their district, which reverently called them the "Lords of our heads." The Mikado of the period, Koniei, determined to put an end to all this rioting, and to re-establish unity of government. With that object he collected a large army, gave the direction of it to his General, Yoritomo, and told him to crush out the local chieftains. Yoritomo went to work to do it, but not quite as Koniei wished. He allied himself with the most powerful of the Daimios, upset the rest, reorganised them all into a regular feudality,

and ended by getting himself appointed Shiogun, annexing, for the first time, to that purely military office the entire direction of the civil and political affairs of the country, and declaring that the separate power which he thus assumed was hereditary in his family. Such was the origin of what we erroneously call the Temporal Emperors of Japan. The party of the Mikado, of course, objected to this usurpation, and fought bravely against the new self-constituted government. Torrents of blood were shed, savage cruelties were perpetrated; but in the long-run, after several generations had been slaughtered, the power of the Shioguns became definitive and undisputed. Still, notwithstanding their success, they never seem to have thought of actually suppressing the Mikado; on the contrary, they reigned solely in his name and for his account. The divine nature of the imperial race, the long duration of its dynasty, had so attached the nation to it that any attack upon the person of the Mikados was impracticable. They preserved the title, the pomp, and the appearances of supreme royalty, with the power of investiture of both Shioguns and Daimios; they continued to be the fountain of honour, and they retained a distinct right of veto over the Shiogun's acts. It is, however, an error to suppose that they became spiritual chiefs or pontiffs. They never exercised or possessed any theocratic powers. They continued to be nominally the sole temporal emperors of Japan, though they were pensioned by the Shiogun, and had scarcely any practical authority. In order to prevent collisions, the Mikado and the Shiogun wisely determined to live apart. The former took his residence at Miako, while the latter went to Yedo, three hundred miles away.

He had, however, to make a journey to Miako once a-year, to do homage to his superior.

This new organisation did not work quite smoothly. The descendants of Yoritomo did not manage to keep the sort of throne which he had established for them. They were turned out by new rebellions, and their places were occupied successively by a variety of adventurers, none of whom have left a name excepting Oda Novunaga and Taiko Fideyos. The latter, who was at first an apothecary's apprentice, and became Shiogun in 1590, grew to be so powerful that he was able to declare war on China, to land in the Corea with 160,000 men, and to beat the Chinese armies in every encounter during several years. His son was dispossessed by Iyeyas (who had been the intimate friend of Taiko), and he at last founded a permanent succession. His descendants reigned at Yedo until the suppression of the separate government of the Shiogun in 1868. It should be observed that since 1858 the Shiogun has been called Taicoon by Europeans.

From the time of Iyeyas no more civil wars took place. The interest of Japanese history thenceforth lies in the relations which commenced between Japan and Europe.

Europe first heard of the existence of Japan from Marco Polo, who alluded to it in the story of his travels by the name of Zipangu, and gave a short description of it from what he gathered from the Chinese. The Portuguese became aware, after their settlement in India, that Zipangu was a land lying to the east of China, that it was therefore called Jih-pon, or "Sun Source," and that it was rich in precious metals, silk, and other valuable productions. But they do not appear to have made any attempt to get there; and it was not till 1543 that three Portuguese sailors

landed on the Japanese coast by accident, a tempest having blown them thither, as they were on their way from Siam to Northern China in a junk. They were very well received by the Daimio of the locality—mainly, however, because one of them possessed an arquebus, and astonished the chieftain by his shooting—and after a stay of some duration, were allowed to leave, and got back to Goa with the story of their adventures, and of the wonderful country they had discovered. The Portuguese traders in the Eastern seas immediately opened up dealings with the new land; and shortly afterwards, in 1549, St. Francis Xavier went there and laid the foundation of the Jesuit missions. Trade and conversions prospered rapidly and simultaneously; the Japanese showed, it is true, a good deal of hesitation and some ill-will on both subjects; but the Portuguese, both priests and merchants, were men of energy; they pushed resolutely onwards, baptising, and building churches on the one hand, selling goods and making huge profits on the other.

It seems scarcely credible that the Japanese should have stood all this, especially as from the very first there was a large and powerful party amongst them whose sole desire was to at once drive the Portuguese into the sea. If they did not realise that desire, it was because their instinctive hatred and mistrust of foreigners had not yet had time to become a fixed principle of action, and also because the Portuguese of that epoch were not men to be easily beaten off. The missionaries were worthy successors of the great Apostle of the Indies; the mariners and the merchants had in them something of the blood of Cortes and Pizarro, and may even have indulged the dream of imitating those conquerors. For these reasons they got on well at first; converts to Christianity

were counted by thousands; profits, represented by the exportation of precious metals, were counted by millions. But Japan was further off than Mexico or Peru, and the Japanese were a very different race from the subjects of Montezuma and Atahualpa; the Portuguese possessed no force to back up their projects; the Japanese gradually got out of temper; and after some fifty years of admirable success, both in trade and purchasing, signs of hostility began to appear. Decrees were issued against the Christian religion; edicts were made against all foreigners; both were capriciously withdrawn, and then once more set in force; converts were put to death, and churches were destroyed. Then came another period of relative calm. At last, in 1624, out broke the final storm; Christianity was suppressed by law, the ports were closed, strangers were ordered off, and an almost universal murdering of converts and priests took place, with attendant cruelties of the most hideous kind. The Portuguese resisted as they could, and hung in their vessels about the coast, seeking still to trade; but in 1638 sterner measures were adopted, and what remained of Christians or Portuguese were swept away for good.

While all this was going on, the English, the Spaniards, and the Dutch had made attempts to get a share of the newly-opened trade, but the Portuguese managed to keep them almost out of it as long as they held their ground. When, however, they were driven off, the Dutch, who had been dealing in a trifling way since 1609, managed most cleverly to get in. They contrived to make the Japanese understand that they were Protestants, that they had consequently no kind of religious interest to serve, and therefore were not dangerous in that respect; they urged that certain European products had become necessary to Japan,

and must be supplied by some one; and finally, after long patience and much humiliation, they obtained permission to establish and maintain one factory on an island in the harbour of Nagasaki. From that moment they alone possessed the right of trading with Japan, and immensely lucrative their commerce was for more than a hundred years. It dwindled down at last to one ship a year, and almost ceased to be of any pecuniary value; but it was kept up as a Dutch monopoly until 1854.

From 1638 the Japanese Government resolutely refused to allow any foreign vessels to touch at its ports under any pretext, and prohibited the slightest intercourse between foreigners and its own subjects. So pitilessly was this latter law applied, that even Japanese sailors who were wrecked on the Russian or other neighbouring shores were not permitted to go home again without great difficulty, nor until after much purification. The half-dozen Dutchmen who managed the factory at Nagasaki were kept locked up in their little island of Decima, and were not allowed to hold any communication with the mainland, excepting once in every four years, when their manager had to visit Yedo to do homage to the Shiogun. The occasional attempts which were made by European war or trading ships to open communications on the coast were persistently repelled, by force if necessary; the closing of Japan against the outer world was absolute and complete. Time in no way weakened the conviction that the safety and the honour of the country depended on its isolation; even so recently as the year 1843, a new edict confirming the old principle was promulgated, and was handed to the Dutch for transmission to the European powers, in order to put an end to the growing visits of unwelcome ships. This edict said: "Shipwrecked persons of the Japan-

ese nation must not be brought back to their country otherwise than in Dutch or Chinese vessels; for in case these shipwrecked persons shall be brought back in the ships of other nations they will not be received. Considering the express prohibition, even to Japanese subjects, to explore or make examination of the coasts or islands of the empire, this prohibition, for greater reasons, is extended to foreigners." This decree supplies evidence enough that the old theories and convictions were still preponderant, and were likely, so far as apparent probabilities could be judged, to remain in force indefinitely. The opium war between England and China, the nature and objects of which were thoroughly known and understood by the Japanese, was an event not calculated to encourage them to reopen intercourse with foreigners.

So things went on until 1853, when, after one or two ineffectual attempts to open up communication, a squadron of United States war vessels steamed one day into the harbour of Yokohama; and Commodore Perry, who commanded it, informed the astounded governor that he had come to make a treaty. The local authorities instantly ordered him to sea, and said they would burn his ships if he did not go. The Commodore replied "Try;" but they did not try. Yankee coolness was too much for Japanese resistance, when put really to the test. So negotiations were set going: a letter to the Mikado, which the Commodore had brought from President Fillmore, was sent up to Miako, and the Americans agreed to come back in a few months for an answer. At the beginning of the following spring the Commodore returned; he wanted a treaty, and would not go away without one; the Shogun got frightened, and gave in. On 31st March 1854 the extorted document was signed, and

Japan was once more opened, after 216 years of absolute isolation.

The other powers imitated somewhat negligently the example set to them by the United States. It was not till 1858 that Lord Elgin, on a chance visit to Japan, thought he might as well profit by the opportunity to make a treaty for England, though he had no instructions on the subject. All the European countries (excepting Greece and Turkey) slowly and successively followed on. The Shogun's government ceased all resistance (European war-ships looked so strong); the three ports which had been opened to the Americans became available to the world; three other ports were added to the list, and a new spoliation of Japan commenced.

The history of the Empire of the Rising Sun is divisible, as this sketch shows, into four distinct periods: the first, which ends with the landing of the Portuguese in 1543, is purely local; the second, which extends from 1543 to 1638, includes the story of St. Francis Xavier, the trade with Portugal, the persecutions, and the final expulsion of Europeans; the third, from 1638 to 1854, is distinguished by the Dutch monopoly and the resolute exclusion of all foreigners; in the fourth, since 1854, Japan has once more become accessible to everybody.

This rough outline of the facts needs, however, some commentary; it in no way suffices by itself to enable us to understand the changes which have come about. And it is the more essential, in this case, to look a little underneath the surface of events, for the reason that there never has been a country in which sentiments and emotions have exercised greater influence than in Japan, or where the connection between the feelings and the history of a nation has been more complete.

When the Portuguese first saw the Japanese, and tried to form an

estimate of their character, they found them to be—what they probably always had been, and certainly still were until a few years ago—a people of great qualities and exaggerated defects. They were honest, ingenious, courteous, clean, and frugal, animated by a strong love of knowledge, endowed with a wonderful capacity of imitation, with deep self-respect, and with a sentiment of personal honour far beyond what any other race has ever reached. But they were proud, absolute, revengeful, profoundly suspicious, hesitating and mistrustful, and, in the lower classes, openly and radically immoral. Their organisation was purely military; war was the only occupation (with the exception of the priesthood) which was considered worthy of a man: agriculture was left to serfs, while commerce was regarded as degrading. The fighting classes, which, in fact, constituted the only active element of the population, had the utmost contempt for trade, and the entire people were deficient in the commercial aptitudes which so particularly distinguish the neighbouring Chinese. The Portuguese at once detected this latter insufficiency, and unscrupulously made the most enormous profits out of their defenceless prey. The Japanese were helpless in their hands; they had never dealt with foreigners, and had, consequently, no idea of the price of any object beyond their own island shores. The Portuguese brought them, for the first time, European products; and as there was at that period scarcely anything to export in return, payment was effected almost entirely in gold and silver calculated far under their European value. As the precious metals thus obtained were immediately shipped away, gold and silver became scarce in the districts round the ports; edicts were issued, pro-

hibiting their exit from the country, and the Portuguese and all other foreigners began to be regarded as despoilers of Japan. It is difficult to form any reliable opinion as to the quantity of gold which was thus removed, but there is some reason to suppose that the Portuguese alone, during their ninety years of trade, must have carried away at least forty millions sterling: while Sir Stamford Raffles went so far as to estimate the total sum which, in his day, Europe had extracted from Japan, at the enormous figure of two hundred millions, the greater part of which had gone to Holland. To the hostility which all this provoked was superadded the animosity which grew up, on political grounds, against the Christian missionaries. The two causes together gradually brought about a hatred of the intensest kind against Europeans, and provoked the sanguinary explosion of 1624.

So far there was an apparent motive, an intelligible reason, for the decision of the Japanese to shut out foreigners; but it is at first sight less easy to comprehend that such a measure, instead of being purely temporary, should have become permanent and durable. That they should have violently protected themselves against the abominable robbery to which they were subjected, was legitimate and proper; that they should have expelled the priests whose teaching put in danger the maintenance of their political institutions, was natural enough in their then condition of mind and habits; but it is difficult to understand, without some additional explanations, why so intelligent and so self-confident a race should have kept up absolute seclusion during more than two hundred years as the sole remedy for the wrongs which their first contact with Europeans had provoked,

and why no attempt was ever made by them to examine the real nature of the question, so as to discover means of dealing with it more practical and less radical than the hermetic stoppage of all communication with abroad. In order to appreciate the real causes of the prolongation of this wilful solitude, of this resolute abandonment of the advantages of intimate connection with the world, we must revert to the influence which was alluded to just now—to feeling. We live in Europe in a political condition which excludes feeling from any share in the attitude or the decisions of governments; but in Japan the state was very different. The Japanese had been utterly alone for more than two thousand years; the constant practice of unchanging habits, and the total absence of all means of comparison with other nations, had led them to regard those habits as the only ones which were worthy of their race; an experiment of ninety years of foreign intercourse had turned out—though it was on the smallest scale—to be most damaging to their material interests, and to be full of menace for their ancient institutions; the strangers who had forced themselves upon them were, in their eyes, both contemptible and dangerous—contemptible because they came to trade, dangerous because they impoverished Japan, and sought to implant in it a religion which was in every respect opposed to the theory on which the maintenance of the Mikado's power essentially depended. When once the opinion had sprung up that there was no safety in intimacy with strangers, it grew rapidly into a national conviction; it acquired all the force which reaction lends to unreasoned decisions; it became a permanent protest against any possible renewal of the events which had produced

it. Hatred of Europeans was handed on as an article of faith from generation to generation; all classes felt alike about it; a reopening of communications was regarded as synonymous with the destruction of Japan. It was the strongest case of inveterate, irradicable prejudice which history records.

The intensity of the conviction would, however, have been kept up with difficulty if it had not been stimulated by the peculiar social organisation to which Yoritomo had given a final form, by the concentration of all power and all example in a limited aristocratic caste, composed of a few hundred nobles, possessed of definite feudal rights, and backed up, each of them, by a following recruited from the special hereditary class of Samurai, "two-sworded men," born to fight, and to do nothing else. In a society so composed, where material interests had virtually no existence, where personal consideration and military reputation were almost the sole objects of ambition, the idea of individual honour attained an exaggeration of development beyond anything which modern imaginations can conceive. Duelling and suicide, though not legalised, were organised institutions, and were regarded as the sole possible reparations for the slightest unintentional discourtesy, or the slightest involuntary fault. The result of all this naturally was, that national opinion was formed by the upper classes only, and that that opinion was irresistible and carried everything before it. There was no discussion, no difference of views—unity of sentiment was inevitable; the child inherited his opinions from his father; the lower strata of population blindly and reverently imitated their masters. Under conditions such as these, no voluntary change was possible.

This was the state of things when the Americans broke in; and it seems incredible, to us lookers-on, that a brave and warlike nation, blindly confident in its judgment and its strength, actuated by prejudices such as have been just described, should have supported such an outrage without fighting. Even the Japanese themselves do not understand how it came about that they should have allowed the Shiogun to submit tamely to the dictation of a plucky sailor, supported by three steamers and four sloops, and how the deeply-rooted traditions of their nation should have been abandoned at the very first contact with an outside difficulty. Not a shot was fired, no material force was used; the Japanese did not then learn (as they did a few years afterwards) what marine artillery is: obstinacy of purpose was sufficient to upset a system which Japan believed to be as solid and as durable as its snow-topped mountain, Fusi-yama. All this was done by the Shiogun; but though he gave way, the people did not accept the change; they looked on savagely at this sudden collapse of one of their main principles of action. Enforced contact with the foreigner did not lead them to like him better; they could not, however, unmake the treaties, so they took refuge in assassination as a protest against their signature. We all of us remember the murders of Europeans which took place from time to time during the first ten years after 1854, and which the Government was powerless to prevent, because their perpetrators did not regard them in any way as crimes, but, on the contrary, as meritorious acts. The bitter disgust which prevailed throughout Japan was increased by the unlucky occurrence of a bad earthquake towards the end of 1854, and by the

arrival of the cholera a few months later. Both these events were of course attributed by the populace to the anger of the gods at the desecration of the soil; both served, in their eyes, as a new argument against the opening of the ports.

It is, however, necessary to observe, that even in Japan there was, as elsewhere, an opposition. Towards the close of the eighteenth century, some of the native interpreters who were employed for communication with the Dutch, had ventured to insinuate that the policy of solitude was perhaps not so wise as was imagined. At first they did not dare to speak out openly, for any distinct expression of opinion on such a subject was impossible; and, furthermore, they were few in number and without influence. But when the news of the fall of Napoleon and of the re-establishment of peace in Europe reached the Court of Yedo, the anti-exclusion advocates were able to form a little party, and to raise a whisper that the time was favourable for the consideration of a change of system, though they well knew that the old Mikado Court would not listen for an instant to such a notion, and that the Shiogun was almost equally opposed to it. The "port-openers" slowly grew, however, in quantity and quality, and at last became sufficiently audacious to call the exclusionists "frogs in a well;" this appellation being bestowed upon them because their views were so narrow that they could see nothing but the sky above their heads. But the "frogs" had got the power, and would not yield; and when the Shiogun at last let himself be beaten by Commodore Perry, they did their best to stimulate the indignation of the population against the treaty, little thinking that the rage they fanned was destined to deviate from its course, and to end by producing an internal

revolution of a nature which nobody foresaw. At the moment when the treaties were signed, the feudal system remained apparently in full force, both socially and politically, without the slightest outward change. But a tendency to try to limit the power of the Shogun had been growing up for years amongst the members of the loyal Mikado party. They did not yet conceive the idea of suppressing him altogether, but they discussed between themselves the measures which might be adopted in order to restore some part of the reality of government to the Mikado. There are no written records of this movement; it was in great part unseen, yet gained force from year to year, and the signature of the Perry Treaty served as an occasion to bring it suddenly into light. Not only had the Shogun signed that treaty, but he had done so without any explicit permission from the Mikado, and had consequently taken all the odium of it on himself. The group which was in favour of renewing intercourse with foreigners was still too weak to lend any real support to him in his difficulty; and though its members talked very wisely about the necessity of studying Western civilisation for the benefit of Japan, the time had not yet come for them to be listened to. As years passed on, the discontent against the Shogun grew more strong and deep, while, by a singular and most unexpected reaction, hatred against foreigners suddenly and correspondingly diminished. The latter change was brought about, in part, by the two bombardments of Kagoshima and Chioshiu by the English and combined fleets, and by the sentiment of European force in war and science which those two events produced in the Japanese mind; but it would be absurd to attribute so radical a modification of national views to them alone. The change was mainly caused by

a rapid and very general waking up of the population, in all its classes, to the fact that, after all, there was something to learn from Europe, and that the elements of her strength and knowledge merited close examination instead of obstinate repulsion. Feeling, in this new direction, was once more carrying Japan away; in the higher castes, which were strongly animated by loyalty and patriotism, it was rendered more ardent still by the wish which simultaneously jumped into existence, to place Japan on a level with the Western nations. Sentiment ran away again with reason; and though argument was abundantly employed to prove the necessity of doing the exact contrary of what everybody had up to that moment done, argument was quite useless; its work was in reality performed by emotion and by infused faith. The desire for national union and national force grew so fast and became so intense that it must be regarded as the real cause and explanation of the suppression of the Shogun in 1868. Unity of patriotic purpose could not coexist with duality of government; the necessity of one strong central power became distinctly evident. The chief Daimios joined the Mikado, and urged him to suppress the Shogun. There was some fighting, but the Shogun was wise enough not to attempt a serious resistance. He accepted the terms which were proposed to him, and retired calmly into private life, as if he had not centuries of effective loyalty behind him. The historical details of this event are not worth repeating here, especially as its real interest lies in its significance as a sign of the movement of opinion and of coming change in the entire attitude of Japan. Its immediate effect was not only to enable the Mikado to again govern in reality, but also

to prepare the way for a second and even more important step—the suppression of the feudal system, and of the privileges and power of the Daimios.

This radical and utterly unexpected result was brought about by another of those sudden impulsive rushes of which we have seen so many examples of late years in Japan; an organisation which had lasted for many hundred years, which involved not only the deepest personal interests, but in reality the whole interior government of the country, was blown away in three months by a gust of feeling. Four of the great Daimios of the west took it into their heads, in 1869, that it was their duty to offer their rights, their property, and their serfs to the Mikado, in order to strengthen and consolidate his newly-acquired authority. The others followed this example of self-sacrificing patriotism; the Daimios suppressed themselves, for duty's sake, because it seemed to be the right thing to do. The Government did not advise them, it did not even say one word; they acted on their own account between themselves. Not one of them attempted to resist (though some of the smaller ones did not altogether like it); one and all they abandoned to the Mikado not only their feudal privileges and dignities, but, what is far more wonderful, the whole of their fortunes too—all for the greater glory of Japan! The oldest aristocracy in the world, sitting in a special parliament at Yedo, had the courage to decide to voluntarily resign its ancient rights and its vast possessions with the single object of fortifying the government of its country and of aiding it to become one and strong. This really was a grand act; history offers no parallel to it, at least on such a scale. Two hundred and seventy-eight military princes, possessing regal powers, vast

wealth, and separate armies, abdicated, from pure patriotic feeling, the station which their families had held for twenty centuries. One or two of them had revenues which reached the almost fabulous amount of £800,000 a year, others had only a few hundred pounds of income; but large or small, their incomes and their property were given up; they kept nothing for themselves. The Government returned to them one-tenth of their annual receipts, and that was all that they preserved of their previous splendours. It was, however, necessary to establish an honorary position for these dispossessed suzerains and their families; and with that object the class of "flowery nobility," which had formerly existed in another shape, was re-established; the ex-Daimios and the privileged caste of "Courtiers of the Mikado" were merged together in it; and all that now remains to the descendants of the feudal lords is a graceful title, and, in most cases, an utterly insufficient income. Neither Louis the Eleventh nor Richelieu could have done the work of decapitation more completely.

For the moment the ex-Daimios were furthermore permitted to retain the government of their districts, as local functionaries acting in the name and for account of the Mikado's Government; but in August 1871 they were again called up to Yedo, and were informed that their services were no longer needed, and that they were replaced by civil prefects. Liberties were successively granted to the lower classes, so as to efface as much as possible the old distinctions and privileges of rank, and to lift up the people to a sentiment of its own dignity, which it had never felt. There still continue to be differences between the nobles and the populace,—in their responsibility for crimes, for instance, and in some other details; but these dif-

ferences will shortly be abolished, and all Japan will become equal before the law.

Such is, in the shortest words, the strange history of this strange country; and this last is probably the strangest of the phases through which it has passed. A reaction in public feeling, of which no one could foresee the possibility, has suddenly swept away prejudices and institutions which seemed to be immovable, and has replaced them by an organization and a tendency in absolute contradiction to the whole experience and teaching of the past. Japan has entered on the new road thus opened to it with the eager zeal of a neophyte, and with the impetuosity which is usually attendant on violent reactions. After this rough sketch of the past, we shall be better able to understand the present.

The government is now organised on a basis which is partly European and partly Japanese. The Mikado is, theoretically, an absolute sovereign, who reigns and governs; but the work of government is done for him by the "Great Council," which is divided into three sections—Centre, Right, and Left. The Centre is composed of the Prime Minister, *vice* Prime Minister, and five advisers. The Left is made up exclusively of the Council of the State, the functions of which are analogous to those of the French Conseil d'Etat, so far at least as the preparation and discussion of laws is concerned. The Right includes all the Ministers and *vice*-Ministers of the nine departments into which the administration has lately been divided. The Ministers, either individually or united in what we should call a Cabinet, decide all ordinary questions; but points of real importance are reserved for the Great Council, presided over by the Mikado. This system, which, after several changes,

assumed its present form quite recently, has given practical results; but it is rather cumbrous, and evidently needs further modification. A parliament was formed in 1869, with deputies selected by the provincial governments; it, however, represented the former fiefs alone, the towns and villages sending up no members. Its functions were purely consultative, and in no way legislative. It was of no use whatever, and has dropped so thoroughly out of sight that it has not been called together since the Council of State was organised. The idea of trying an elective parliament is being actively discussed, and the Ministry is very desirous to see it realised; but until the population has become sufficiently educated to understand what voting means, it would be useless to appeal to it to choose its delegates.

The local administration in the provinces is in the hands of prefects, one of them residing in each of the seventy-five districts into which Japan is now cut up. The powers and the attributes of these prefects are far more extensive than those of any similar functionaries in Europe; for not only do they govern, but they collect taxes, manage the police, and sit as judges civilly and criminally. There is, however, a limit to their judicial action, for they cannot carry into execution sentences involving banishment or death until they have been confirmed by the Minister of Justice. In the villages, causes are pleaded before subaltern civil officers. All this, however, is under process of modification.

Four years have sufficed to bring the government of Japan from the anarchy consequent upon a revolution which changed everything, to this forward state of organisation. A remarkable result it is, regarded as a whole; but it becomes still more

striking when its fruits are considered, for then we get from theories to facts, and the progress made becomes distinctly evident.

Finance is naturally the first question to be looked at, for the success or failure of the present attempt to Europeanise Japan mainly hangs upon it. The Treasury arrangements, however, are of course in a state of transition, like all else, and it would be premature to critically examine them in detail; indeed it would be impossible to give any information at all about them if a budget for the current year—a carefully-calculated, serious budget—had not just been prepared, for the first time in the history of Japan. With this new aid we can try to appreciate the ways and means by which progress is to be paid for; but still it is not easy to ascertain exactly what the position is, for plenty of points remain doubtful or unexplained. The assessment and regularisation of the revenues handed over by the Daimios has been a very intricate operation, which is not even yet definitely completed; the basis of taxation varies largely in the different districts, and no official documents are available on the subject of the relative composition of the local imposts; the returns of various kinds which have been published by the Government during the last three years have generally been discovered afterwards to be incomplete or incorrect, and cannot therefore be referred to. For these reasons we are still rather in the dark; but we have, at all events, got at last a statement which we can trust so far as it goes, which has cost months of patient labour, and which has been prepared with infinite precision and after scrupulous verification. It shows both receipts and payments for 1872, and a series of

detailed explanations are appended to it, which testify the care and caution of its compilers. As it is a document unknown either in Europe or in Japan, it is worth while to give it here in a condensed form (the original is worked out in dollars, which are here converted into English money at an exchange of 4s. 3d.) :—

RECEIPTS.

Rice, at 4½ dollars per koku,	£11,444,556
Customs,	298,350
Internal revenue (excise duties, &c.),	225,675
Miscellaneous,	260,950

Total of Receipts, £12,229,351

EXPENDITURE.

Imperial household,	£113,050
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,	112,200
Army,	1,700,000
Navy,	382,500
Colonisation of Yezo,	418,888
Justice,	16,150
Education,	73,312
Finance department (including cost of collecting taxes),	360,963
Public works,	1,763,112
Municipal and provincial governments,	1,386,987
Miscellaneous,	452,413
Cost of manufacturing new bank-notes and of establishing the mint,	210,375
Pensions to Daimios and retainers,	4,024,112
Balance of indemnity to European Powers on the Simonsaki affair,	318,750
Interest on the English loan,	78,625

Total of Expenditure, £11,420,385

Surplus, £809,146.

A budget which balances with such a surplus is always a pleasant spectacle; but in this case it gains in merit when it is looked closely into, for the receipts are estimated most moderately, while the outlay includes a variety of special payments which will not occur again,

and whose absence will increase the surplus on following years. The rice-tax, which forms nearly the whole revenue of Japan, is calculated at a value which is far under the average rate of sales (it is estimated at $4\frac{1}{2}$ dollars per koku, though the price varies from 5 to $6\frac{1}{2}$ dollars, and has been as high as 10 dollars); while the quantity to which it will apply is proved to be correct by very elaborate returns, which evidently have been prepared with the greatest care in each locality. The estimate of receipts from customs and excise dues is made with similar detail and precision, and is likely to come out in excess of the amounts shown. The expenditure side of the account comprises £1,250,000 of advances which will come back in a few months, and an almost equal sum for items which are special and not annual charges. The large sum allowed for pensions will diminish every year by the deaths of the recipients. Furthermore, the £318,000 shown for the Simonosaki payment to foreign Powers, though included in the list of anticipated outlay, will probably not be really asked for: some of the Powers, indeed, have already officially renounced all claim to it. For these reasons this budget may be regarded as very satisfactory, and as giving promise of a bright financial future for Japan.

But while this praise is fully merited, so far as figures are concerned, it is impossible not to add that the principle of taxing rice, the staple food of the nation, is radically false. It weighs with extreme unfairness on the agricultural population, for it absorbs one-third of the entire annual crop; and though it has existed for many centuries, the people have never grown accustomed to it, and regard it as a heavy burden. It is fair to add that though, in the eyes of the Govern-

ment, it is a most tempting impost, singularly certain and productive, and very easy to get in, the Ministry is seriously considering the means of gradually diminishing it, of replacing it by other duties less objectionable and more in harmony with the spirit which now guides the country, and, indeed, of entirely remodelling the whole system of taxation.

It must not, however, be forgotten that Japan is considerably in debt, though in a way which we in Europe do not quite understand, and certainly do not practise. She owes altogether £27,412,000, of which £15,204,000 are represented by paper currency, £10,412,000 are debts incurred towards Japanese subjects by former local governments, and the balance of £1,796,000 is due to foreign creditors (the Simonosaki indemnity included). The paper currency was in part issued years ago, but five-sevenths of it represent the cost of the recent revolutions. It has a forced circulation, but the Government receives it in payment of the excise dues and proposes to gradually withdraw it as the surplus revenue increases. Meanwhile the old bank-notes are being replaced by very handsome new ones which have just been manufactured at Frankfort. The debts of the former local governments are of three classes, each constituting about one-third of the whole amount. One of these categories is considered as being in no way binding on the State; the second is to be repaid at the rate of £50,000 a-year; and the third is to be converted into bonds at twenty-five years' date, bearing interest at 4 per cent. From this it will be seen that, with the exception of the last item, none of the interior debt bears interest; and that, though the Government fully recognises its liability, it is absolutely master of the position.

and virtually dictates its own terms to its home creditors. This is because the greater part of the debt, in all its forms, is inherited by the present Administration from its former adversaries; and because, under such circumstances, the original lenders of the money are only too glad to get paid anyhow.

The note currency, so far as it may remain in existence, will of course be transferred some day to the National Bank, which it is proposed to found, so as to relieve the State from the false position of guaranteeing paper money; in that event the amount it represents may perhaps, become, as is the case in many European countries, a permanent advance from the Bank to the Government. If that be done, the remainder of the local indebtedness will be easily dealt with as proposed, in the form of bonds or terminable annuities. Anyhow the sum involved is small, and, with a productive budget, Japan will get clear of it in a few years. The foreign debt is repayable by annual payments over ten years from 1873; no doubt can be entertained as to their regular discharge. The thoroughly solvent position of the State results distinctly from the foregoing figures.

. After finance the most important question in Japanese eyes now is education; indeed there are enthusiasts who consider that the one duty of the Government is to teach the people, and that all else is unworthy of attention. A Ministry of Instruction was definitely created in 1871; and considering the short time it has existed, and the serious and varied difficulties with which it has had to deal, it has got on very well. Public primary schools are increasing rapidly, especially in the towns; but the movement is far more marked in the western provinces and on the coast than in the interior, where the eagerness for

improvement is less felt. Private schools are more abundant still; and as anybody can establish them—subject to a permission which is always granted—they spring up with facility wherever they are wanted. As yet there are no statistics on the subject; neither facts nor figures can be quoted; but the opinion in Japan is that, if the movement continues healthily, every man and woman of the next generation will probably know how to read and write. The movement is aided by the fact that even under the old *régime* education was very general, although there was scarcely any Government intervention with respect to it. Books, especially translations of foreign works, are increasing with a rapidity which indicates the active curiosity which has laid hold of the middle and upper classes. Newspapers and local printing-presses are multiplying, and the desire for knowledge has taken a form which, without exaggeration, may be described as feverish, especially in the towns. The books which are most read are those which recount the history, the manners, and the internal condition of other countries; treatises on political economy and on moral questions are also much sought after. All kinds of learning are absorbed, and even arithmetic is beginning to be generally taught, in spite of the horror of it which the Samurai have long felt, as being one of the elements of trade. For European art and science the Japanese care thus far very little, but medicine has always been a cherished study with them; while engineering, mining, and other industrial questions are beginning to attract attention. In order to facilitate the acquirement of foreign languages, the Government has brought out several professors, and has sent, at its own expense, a large number of students to America and Europe. There are now more than 500 of them, spread all about the world, undergoing all kinds of teaching in

all kinds of places. Thus far they have been directly chosen by the Ministers or Provincial Governors; but the demands for admission into the envied class of State students have grown so numerous of late, that henceforth a competitive examination will be held in order to make a selection from the candidates. In addition to these privileged young travellers, who receive a free passage out and home, and an annual allowance which has just been fixed at £200, a good many other Japanese have recently come away at their own cost in order to see the world. Even ladies are now added to the list; for an ex-princess and her companion landed at Marseilles three months ago, put on chignons, French gowns and bonnets (all which they wore marvellously well), and are at this moment hard at work in England learning grammar.

In 1855 an attempt was made to begin public works, but no real progress was achieved in that direction until after the fall of the Shogun. During the last three years a great impulse has been given to this department, as is shown by the large amount allotted to it in this year's budget, where it figures for £1,763,000. The coast is now well supplied with lighthouses, the entrances to the harbours are all buoyed, and dockyards are open for repairing vessels, all of which is very needful in a country surrounded by stormy seas. The works inland are more important still: the river-courses are being embanked; new roads surveyed and made; a railway has been constructed between Yedo and Yokohama; telegraphs are extending; and a variety of new undertakings is in preparation. These works are directed by Europeans, most of whom have been chosen by the Government with a singularly happy appreciation of their fitness for the special posts they fill.

Agriculture has always been skillfully practised in Japan; and excepting in the employment of machines, and in the introduction of new plants and of mineral and chemical manures, there is not room for much marked improvement. Every yard of fertile soil is utilised; and ably-organised irrigation stimulates the natural activity of vegetation, particularly under the admirable climate of the southern and western districts. Rice is of course the main product of the country; but tea, silk, and silk-worms' eggs (which may be counted as agricultural products), beans, peas, and a variety of other crops, are largely grown. Japan produces several special plants of considerable value and importance, particularly the paper mulberry (from the bark and young twigs of which Japanese paper is mainly manufactured), the wax-tree, the camphor-laurel, and the lacquer-gum tree. The manufacture of fermented *saki* and distilled spirit from rice, and of the *soy* sauce from beans, may be regarded as branches of farming work. Ornamental gardening is carried to great perfection; infinite pains are bestowed upon it; and though it assumes a form and seeks to produce effects which seem fantastic and artificial to our eyes, we must recognise that in horticulture, properly so called, the Japanese are wonderfully proficient. The gardens contain a considerable variety of indigeneous plants, amongst which it is hardly necessary to say that the camellia, the Paulownia, and the chrysanthemum occupy a foremost place. The leaf and flower of the latter were adopted long ago by the Mikados as their peculiar emblem; and, more durable than the lilies of France, still continue to be used as royal arms.

In minerals the country is very rich. The precious and useful metals are found there in large

quantities, as well as coal, and a few mines are already worked on an important scale. Rock-crystal is abundant, pearls and coral are fished along the coast, but no diamonds, or indeed any other stones of value, have yet been found. We all know how able the Japanese are in metal-working, especially in cutlery, and gold and copper; very few of us, however, have had an opportunity of seeing, except in the Duke of Edinburgh's collection, the highest class of products of this kind, which do not leave Japan: we have, consequently, but a general idea of the matchless finish and subtle delicacy of the handling, and of the talent which that handling reveals. With the skill which they have so long possessed, and with their capacity of imitation (let it be remembered that they built their first steamboat and its engine solely from a description in a Dutch book) it may be expected that they will soon produce all the hardware with which we now supply them; and, indeed, that they will ultimately export that class of goods to China.

In manufactures generally, there has not, thus far, been much development, though several European articles, such as window-glass, grape-wine, and beer, are beginning to be made on a small scale. In the staple products of Japan, in lacquer, porcelain, and silk crape, no change can possibly be wished for: they are so perfect as they are, that foreigners have not learnt to equal them: indeed, the secret of good lacquer, and of weaving silk with the same pattern on both sides, has never been discovered outside of Japan.

The organisation of the army and navy is beginning. The army is on the French model, wears French uniforms, and is instructed by a military mission, composed of sixteen of the best officers and sub-officers which the French War Office could select. It includes 70,200

men on the standing establishment, not counting the Mikado's body-guard, which is composed of 8312 carefully-selected soldiers. The navy shows nineteen vessels of various classes.

To complete this sketch of the present condition of Japan, it should be added that the population of the Japanese islands (of which there are in all 3801) amounted, according to last year's census, to 32,865,161, which is rather dense for a surface which altogether equals only about three-quarters of the superficies of France, which is full of mountain-ranges, and of which a good deal is simply barren, sea-beaten rock. There is, however, no overcrowding in the houses, for the same census indicates the existence of nearly 8,000,000 buildings. The population is unevenly distributed, the greater part of it being massed in the large towns (Yedo holds as many inhabitants as Paris), or spread thickly along the coast and up the valleys. Any attempt to describe the manners and customs of the people would be out of place here; and, furthermore, the present situation and the forward march of Japan are not likely to be affected by the fact that its people get on horse-back on the off side; that they treat their women and their children with much gentleness; that they speak a language of almost Italian softness; and that they are beginning to eat meat, after feeding themselves from all antiquity on fish, rice, poultry, vegetables, and sea-weed, in ignorance that milk was good to drink, or that cheese and butter could be made from it. Foreigners have taught them that, with all the rest.

These few details, though sketchy and incomplete, give a rough general idea of the position as it now is materially. Its other aspects are equally interesting, for they help to

show us the inner consequences of the reopening of communications. It has produced, as we have seen, thorough governmental changes; it has provoked a rush of curiosity towards Europe, and an immense desire for knowledge; it has largely developed trade, not only in imports, but in exports too. So far, the renewal of relations with the world has certainly been useful to Japan. But their re-establishment has been attended by other circumstances of a far less satisfactory nature, of which, if we have any conscience, we ought to feel ashamed. The Portuguese carried with them new diseases, and robbed the Japanese with all their might; we of this generation could not introduce smallpox and other maladies, for that work was well executed by our predecessors, but we have personally treated the subjects of the Mikado with insolent superiority, and have done our very best to renew the money spoliation to which his defenceless people were subjected three hundred year ago. The first thing we clever foreigners did, as soon as the ports were opened, was to profit by the vast difference of the price of gold which then existed between Japan and Europe, to buy up for one-third of their real value all the kobangs (gold coins) we could get hold of; and though there is no official evidence of the amount which we so took away, good judges are convinced that it amounted at least to ten millions sterling. We paid for this in silver, which was worth at that time in Japan one-fifth of the same weight of gold, instead of one-fifteenth, which is the rate in Europe. And when, to prevent this wholesale robbery, the Government put up the exchange of kobangs into dollars to a figure which corresponded to their real proportion, we screamed with indignation, and said we were abominably ill-used. The English were far from

being the sole perpetrators of this sharp practice; plenty of other nations had representatives in the scramble, but we were as much to blame for it as any others. Then we began to sell European goods at twice their cost, and have industriously gone on doing it ever since, to the advantage of the foreign traders, who have made large fortunes, and to the corresponding disadvantage of the Japanese, who knew no better, and supposed they were getting their money's worth. One example will suffice to show the system which has been adopted, and which is still in force. Three months ago a Japanese agent arrived in Europe to superintend, for the first time, the execution of a certain contract for his Government. This contract amounted to £84,000, and not one of the houses who had been consulted in Japan had consented to undertake it at a lower price. The agent came convinced that all was fair and right, and with no idea that he could possibly improve his bargain; but, for form's sake, he made a few inquiries: he had the luck to stumble to people who could guide him; and the result was, that within a fortnight he quashed the contract he had brought with him (fortunately he had reserved the right to do so), and made another one direct with a manufacturer, who supplied the self-same goods, of the highest quality, for £54,000. It is hardly necessary to say that the difference of £30,000 was to have been all profit to the original contractor, and all loss for the Japanese Government. The effect produced by this revelation was rather violent, especially as the prices thus far paid for a variety of other articles were verified at the same time, and were proved to cover the same proportionate profit for the dealers. It is probable that the Japanese Government will henceforth take measures to protect its interests a little better;

and not only its own interests, but those of its subjects, who are now innocently wasting millions every year in purchases of foreign merchandise at fifty per cent above its fair market value. This adventure will open the eyes of the Japanese, and while it will not augment their love for strangers in their commercial aspect, it will be certainly a useful lesson to both sides. The weak will organise defence, the strong will recognise that the extortion-times are drawing to an end at last, and that profits must be earned at Yokohama on the same fair conditions as elsewhere.

Even foreign Governments are liable to the charge of ill-using Japan. America set the example in 1853, by coolly forcing its way into the Bay of Yedo; and since then other States have shown a distinct tendency to dictate their will because they had big ships and heavy guns. The example of Denmark in the hands of Prussia presents some analogies to the situation of Japan towards the nations who condescend to trade with her on their own terms, without much care for what she likes or wants. It is time to adopt another system; to recognise that Japan merits the same treatment, the same consideration, as are extended to what we call organised and civilised Governments; and to show that ignorance, weakness, and inexperience are regarded by us as motives for protection and friendly aid, and not as reasons for asserting our own force, and for imposing our own views, with the one object of fostering our commerce.

The first treaties, made twelve or fourteen years ago, have now nearly run out; their renewal, for which the new Embassy will endeavour to prepare the way, will afford the Powers an opportunity of showing their sympathy with Japan, and their disposition to admit her cor-

dially into their community. For her the question of these new treaties is very grave; the speed of continuation of her progress will be to some extent affected by the conditions which may be stipulated when the new documents are signed. The honour of Japan in her own eyes, the prestige of her Government towards its subjects, are somewhat dependent on an early modification of the stipulations which at present deprive her of all jurisdiction in her own dominions in cases where foreigners are concerned. She frankly recognises, honestly and straightforwardly, that until she has framed and put in force a system of jurisprudence in harmony with European views and practice, she cannot expect us to abandon our citizens to the uncertainties of her law courts, and that we must, consequently, temporarily maintain our present right of judging our own people; but she is surely justified in requiring that when she shall have completed her new code, based on the Code Napoleon—on which a commission, assisted by an able barrister from Paris, is now at work at Yedo—we shall recognise her right to claim the sole administration of justice within her realm. The augmentation of the customs dues is another important point; they are at present extremely low, and bring in a totally insufficient sum; but the real interest of the matter for Japan lies in the fact that an increase of the import duties would enable her to proportionately decrease the rice-tax, and to shift the burden in some degree on to other shoulders. The awkward questions of admitting Christian missionaries, of authorising foreigners to travel freely in the interior of the country, to intermarry with Japanese, and to hold landed property, are all of the gravest interest. The future of Japan will certainly be

influenced, morally and politically, by the solution which may be given to them. They are not, however, quite ripe for settlement, and it would probably be wise to postpone them altogether for the present. An arrangement between the Treaty Powers, in order to establish uniformity of conditions, would evidently be advantageous, for it would simplify negotiations, and would enable the Japanese delegates to avoid a wearisome repetition of the same arguments to each one of the parties; but it is perhaps scarcely likely that European Governments will take the trouble of consulting each other on the subject; it is more probable that they will separately try to make a good bargain for themselves. But, this time, Japan knows what Europe is, and it cannot be expected that if unjust demands are made upon her she will yield to them as she did before. She has learnt what the power of the press is; she is well aware that her duties and her rights will, if necessary, be publicly discussed; and she will confidently look to public opinion for protection, if she should need it.

The members of the Embassy will not, however, confine their labours to diplomatic dealings; the great object of their presence in the West is to thoroughly examine the principles and details of our Governments, our religions, our commerce, and our society. They will study, as they have already largely done in the United States, the institutions of European countries; for this purpose their mission, which includes about fifty persons of different ranks and occupations, is already dividing itself into sections, each one of which pursues a special subject. Nothing escapes their curious eye; even the ceremonial of our Courts is under their investiga-

tion—a Chamberlain and a Master of the Ceremonies of the Mikado being delegated to examine and report upon that element of royal habits. Their main attention is directed—as might be expected, with the views they have—to education, to the bases of taxation, to the organisation of municipalities and parishes, to the relations between Church and State, to the influence of religion as an element of the art of governing, to political economy, to the nature and the causes of our laws, and to a variety of other questions of a similarly grave and complex nature. If any of them should write a book about us, it will be worth reading. Their object is not, however, to aid us by their observations or advice, but to aid themselves by extracting from us all which seems to be susceptible of practical and useful application in their own country. When we go on a long journey, we do so usually with the conviction that we have nothing to learn abroad: the Japanese are more modest and more wise; their attitude amongst us proves it. It is to be hoped that we shall behave to them in a manner which will justify them in carrying away a good opinion of us.

On their return home they will set to work to put in practice the lessons which they may learn here, by adopting, on a still larger scale than hitherto, measures calculated to develop their people morally, intellectually, and commercially. We shall watch them with keen interest, for they are trying a grave experiment, of which the world offers no other example. The introduction of European education, laws, and usages amongst a population which has just seen all its models destroyed, which is fast losing the respect of class which has held in it for 2500 years, which has no longer the example of ex-

aggerated honour from above (suicide has gone out of fashion lately), which sees its upper strata losing their position, and changing their convictions and occupations, which has no religious faith to guide it towards abstract duty,—may lead to revolutions still more thorough than those which have already taken place. The statesmen who are now governing Japan are fully awake to this not unlikely danger; and the desire of the best of them is to moderate the present movement, to restrict it within safe limits, to control, if possible, the enthusiasm which threatens to go too fast, and to let in new ideas and new means of action only as the population may become fit to utilise them wisely. The task is difficult; reactions rarely listen to the voice of prudence. Converts are generally disposed to rush along without calculating consequences, and without heeding counsel; and this is doubly true of such a race as the Japanese, who are as emotional, as impulsive, and as wayward as the French. Still there are good grounds for hoping that all will go on well. The improvement which has been attained during the last few years, extends in many cases to character as well as to the outward signs of progress. Old defects are disappearing; mistrustfulness—that peculiarly Japanese disposition—is fading fast, and

is being replaced by the confidence which exists in our societies, amongst people who respect each other; the thirst for knowledge is not diminishing the capacity of appreciating truth; the nation's deep-set pride is taking another form, but is in no way growing weaker; the lower classes, in which the eventual danger lies, are gentle, and accustomed to obedience. The question is whether these dispositions will suffice to keep the people quiet when they have once learnt from Europe what the power of the people really is. Levelling tendencies may do their work; and with all the prudence of the Government, and all the present good intentions of the inferior population, the latter may perhaps, some day, imitate the example which their superiors have already set them; may let themselves, in their turn, be run away with by feelings, and by the thirst for novelty, and may try Socialism and an Eastern International. None of this, however, is to be feared at present; years must pass before any real damage can be done; and possibly Japan may find out the secret which France has vainly sought for during eighty years—how to change the whole tendencies and objects of a nation without simultaneously destroying the convictions and the principles which make it one and strong.



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THE PARISIANS.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

THEY who chance to have read the 'Coming Race' may perhaps remember that I, the adventurous discoverer of the land without a sun, concluded the sketch of my adventures by a brief reference to the malady which, though giving no perceptible notice of its encroachments, might, in the opinion of my medical attendant, prove suddenly fatal.

I had brought my little book to this somewhat melancholy close a few years before the date of its publication, and, in the meanwhile, I was induced to transfer my residence to Paris, in order to place myself under the care of an English physician, renowned for his successful treatment of complaints analogous to my own.

I was the more readily persuaded to undertake this journey, partly because I enjoyed a familiar acquaintance with the eminent physician referred to, who had commenced his career and founded his reputation in the United States, partly because I had become a solitary man, the ties of home broken, and dear friends of mine were domiciled in Paris, with whom I should be sure of tender sympathy and cheerful companionship. I had reason to be thankful for this change of residence: the skill of Dr. C—— soon restored me to health. Brought much into contact with various circles of Parisian society, I became acquainted with the persons, and a witness of the events, that form the substance of the tale I am about to submit to the public, which has treated my former book with so generous an indulgence. Sensitive tenacious of that character for strict and

unalloyed veracity which, I flatter myself, my account of the abodes and manners of the Vrilya has established, I could have wished to preserve the following narrative no less jealously guarded than its predecessor from the vagaries of fancy. But truth undisguised, never welcome in any civilised community above ground, is exposed at this time to especial dangers in Paris; and my life would not be worth an hour's purchase if I exhibited her *in puris naturalibus* to the eyes of a people wholly unfamiliarised to a spectacle so indecorous. That care for one's personal safety, which is the first duty of thoughtful man, compels me therefore to reconcile the appearance of *la vérité* to the *bienséances* of the polished society in which *la Liberté* admits no opinion not dressed after the last fashion.

Attired as fiction, Truth may be peacefully received; and, despite the necessity thus imposed by prudence, I indulge the modest hope that I do not in these pages unfaithfully represent certain prominent types of the brilliant population which has invented so many varieties of Koom-Posh; * and even when it appears hopelessly lost in the slough of a Glek-Nas, re-emerges fresh and lively as if from an invigorating plunge into the Fountain of Youth. *O Paris, foyer des idées, et œil du monde!*—animated contrast to the serene tranquillity of the Vrilya, which, nevertheless, thy noisiest philosophers ever pretend to make the goal of their desires—of all communities on which shines the sun and descend the rains of heaven, fertilising alike wisdom and folly, virtue and vice, in every city men have yet built on this earth, mayest thou, O Paris, be the last to brave the wands of the Coming Race and be reduced into cinders for the sake of the common good!

TISH.

PARIS, August 28, 1872.

* Koom-Posh, Glek-Nas. For the derivation of these terms and their metaphorical signification, I must refer the reader to the 'Coming Race,' chapter xli., on the language of the Vrilya. To those who have not read or have forgotten that historical composition, it may be convenient to state briefly that Koom-Posh with the Vrilya is the name for the government of the many, or the ascendancy of the most ignorant or hollow, and may be loosely rendered Hollow-Bosh. When Koom-Posh degenerates from popular ignorance into the popular ferocity which precedes its decease, the name for that state of things is Glek-Nas—viz., the universal strife-rot.

THE PARISIANS.

BOOK FIRST.—CHAPTER I.

It was a bright day in the early spring of 1869.

All Paris seemed to have turned out to enjoy itself. The Tuileries, the Champs Elysées, the Bois de Boulogne, swarmed with idlers. A stranger might have wondered where Toil was at work, and in what nook Poverty lurked concealed. A *millionaire* from the London Exchange, as he looked round on the *magasins*, the equipages, the dresses of the women; as he inquired the prices in the shops and the rent of apartments,—might have asked himself, in envious wonder, How on earth do those gay Parisians live? What is their fortune? Where does it come from?

As the day declined, many of the scattered loungers crowded into the Boulevards; the *cafés* and *restaurants* began to light up.

About this time a young man, who might be some five or six and twenty, was walking along the Boulevard des Italiens, heeding little the throng through which he glided his solitary way: there was that in his aspect and bearing which caught attention. He looked a somebody; but though unmistakably a Frenchman, not a Parisian. His dress was not in the prevailing mode,—to a practised eye it betrayed the taste and the cut of a provincial tailor. His gait was not that of the Parisian—less lounging, more stately; and, unlike the Parisian, he seemed indifferent to the gaze of others.

Nevertheless there was about him that air of dignity or distinction which those who are reared from their cradle in the pride of birth acquire so unconsciously that it seems hereditary and inborn. It must also be confessed that the young

man himself was endowed with a considerable share of that nobility which Nature capriciously distributes among her favourites, with little respect for their pedigree and blazon—the nobility of form and face. He was tall and well shaped, with graceful length of limb and fall of shoulders; his face was handsome, of the purest type of French masculine beauty—the nose inclined to be aquiline, and delicately thin, with finely-cut open nostrils; the complexion clear, the eyes large, of a light hazel, with dark lashes, the hair of a chestnut brown, with no tint of auburn, the beard and moustache a shade darker, clipped short, not disguising the outline of lips, which were now compressed, as if smiles had of late been unfamiliar to them; yet such compression did not seem in harmony with the physiognomical character of their formation, which was that assigned by Lavater to temperaments easily moved to gaiety and pleasure.

Another man, about his own age, coming quickly out of one of the streets of the Chaussée d'Antin, brushed close by the stately pedestrian above described, caught sight of his countenance, stopped short, and exclaimed, "Alain!" The person thus abruptly accosted turned his eye tranquilly on the eager face, of which all the lower part was enveloped in black beard; and slightly lifting his hat, with a gesture of the head that implied, "Sir, you are mistaken; I have not the honour to know you," continued his slow indifferent way. The would-be acquaintance was not so easily rebuffed. "*Peste*," said he, between his teeth, "I am certainly right.

He is not much altered—of course *I am*; ten years of Paris would improve an orang-outang." Quickening his step, and regaining the side of the man he had called "Alain," he said, with a well-bred mixture of boldness and courtesy in his tone and countenance—

"Ten thousand pardons if I am wrong. But surely I accost Alain de Kerouec, son of the Marquis de Rochebriant."

"True, sir; but——"

"But you do not remember me, your old college friend, Frederic Lemercier?"

"Is it possible?" cried Alain, cordially, and with an animation which changed the whole character of his countenance. "My dear Frederic, my dear friend, this is indeed good fortune! So you, too, are at Paris?"

"Of course; and you? Just come, I perceive," he added, somewhat satirically, as, linking his arm in his new-found friend's, he glanced at the cut of that friend's coat-collar.

"I have been here a fortnight," replied Alain.

"Hem! I suppose you lodge in the old Hotel de Rochebriant. I passed it yesterday, admiring its vast *façade*, little thinking you were its inmate."

"Neither am I; the hotel does not belong to me—it was sold some years ago by my father."

"Indeed! I hope your father got a good price for it; those grand hotels have trebled their value within the last five years. And how is your father? Still the same polished *grand seigneur*? I never saw him but once, you know; and I shall never forget his smile, *style grand monarque*, when he patted me on the head and tipped me ten napoleons."

"My father is no more," said Alain, gravely; "he has been dead nearly three years."

"*Ciel!* forgive me, I am greatly shocked. Hem! so you are now the Marquis de Rochebriant, a great

historical name, worth a large sum in the market. Few such names left. Superb place your old chateau, is it not?"

"A superb place, No—a venerable ruin, Yes!"

"Ah, a ruin! so much the better. All the bankers are mad after ruins—so charming an amusement to restore them. You will restore yours, without doubt. I will introduce you to such an architect! has the *moyen âge* at his fingers' ends. Dear—but a genius."

The young Marquis smiled—for since he had found a college friend, his face showed that it could smile; smiled, but not cheerfully, and answered—

"I have no intention to restore Rochébriant. The walls are solid; they have weathered the storms of six centuries; they will last my time, and with me the race perishes."

"Bah! the race perish, indeed! you will marry. *Parlez-moi de ça*—you could not come to a better man. I have a list of all the heiresses at Paris, bound in russia leather. You may take your choice out of twenty. Ah, if I were but a Rochebriant! It is an infernal thing to come into the world a Lemercier. I am a democrat, of course. A Lemercier would be in a false position if he were not. But if any one would leave me twenty acres of land, with some antique right to the De and a title, faith, would not I be an aristocrat, and stand up for my order? But now we have met, pray let us dine together. Ah! no doubt you are engaged every day for a month. A Rochebriant just new to Paris must be *fêté* by all the Faubourg."

"No," answered Alain, simply—"I am not engaged; my range of acquaintance is more circumscribed than you suppose."

"So much the better for me. I am luckily disengaged to-day, which is not often the case, for I am in

some request in my own set, though it is not that of the Faubourg. Where shall we dine?—at the *Trois Frères*?"

"Wherever you please. I know no *restaurant* at Paris except a very ignoble one, close by my lodging."

"*A propos*, where do you lodge?"

"Rue de l'Université, Numero * * *"

"A fine street, but *triste*. If you have no longer your family hotel, you have no excuse to linger in that museum of mummies, the Faubourg St. Germain; you must go into one of the new quarters by the Champs Elysées. Leave it to me; I'll find you a charming apartment. I know one to be had a bargain—a *bagatelle*—500 naps a-year. Cost you about two or three thousand more to furnish tolerably, not *showily*. Leave all to me. In three days you shall be settled. *A propos*! horses! You must have English ones. How many?—three for the saddle, two for your *coupé*? I'll find them for you. I will write to London tomorrow. *Reese* (Rice) is your man."

"Spare yourself that trouble, my dear Frederic. I keep no horses and no *coupé*. I shall not change my apartment." As he said this, Rochebriant drew himself up somewhat haughtily.

"Faith," thought Lemercier, "is it possible that the Marquis is poor? No. I have always heard that the Rochebriants were among the greatest proprietors in Bretagne. Most likely, with all his innocence of the Faubourg St. Germain, he knows enough of it to be aware that I, Frederick Lemercier, am not the man to patronise one of its greatest nobles. *Sacre bleu*! if I thought that; if he meant to give himself airs to me, his old college friend—I would—I would call him out."

Just as M. Lemercier had come to that bellicose resolution, the Marquis said, with a smile which, though frank, was not without a

certain grave melancholy in its expression, "My dear Frederic, pardon me if I seem to receive your friendly offers ungraciously. But believe that I have reasons you will approve for leading at Paris a life which you certainly will not envy;" then, evidently desirous to change the subject, he said in a livelier tone, "But what a marvellous city this Paris of ours is! Remember I had never seen it before: it burst on me like a city in the Arabian Nights two weeks ago. And that which strikes me most—I say it with regret and a pang of conscience—is certainly not the Paris of former times, but that Paris which M. Buonaparte—I beg pardon, which the Emperor—has called up around him, and identified forever with his reign. It is what is new in Paris that strikes and enthralls me. Here I see the life of France, and I belong to her tombs!"

"I don't quite understand you," said Lemercier. "If you think that because your father and grandfather were Legitimists, you have not the fair field of living ambition open to you under the Empire, you never were more mistaken. *Moyen âge*, and even *rococo*, are all the rage. You have no idea how valuable your name would be either at the Imperial Court or in a Commercial Company. But with your fortune you are independent of all but fashion and the Jockey Club. And *à propos* of that, pardon me—what villain made your coat?—let me know; I will denounce him to the police."

Half amused, half amazed, Alain Marquis de Rochebriant looked at Frederic Lemercier much as a good-tempered lion may look upon a lively poodle who takes a liberty with his mane, and, after a pause, he replied curtly, "The clothes I wear at Paris were made in Bretagne; and if the name of Rochebriant be of any value at all in Paris,

which I doubt, let me trust that it will make me acknowledged as *gentilhomme*, whatever my taste in a coat, or whatever the doctrines of a club composed—of jockies.”

“Ha, ha!” cried Lemercier, freeing himself from the arm of his friend, and laughing the more irresistibly as he encountered the grave look of the Marquis. “Pardon me—I can’t help it—the Jockey Club—composed of jockeys!—it is too much!—the best joke! My

dear Alain, there is some of the best blood of Europe in the Jockey Club; they would exclude a plain *bourgeois* like me. But it is all the same; in one respect you are quite right. Walk in a *blouse* if you please—you are still Rochebriant—you would only be called eccentric. Alas! I am obliged to send to London for my pantaloons; that comes of being a Lemercier. But here we are in the Palais Royal.”

CHAPTER II.

The *salons* of the Trois Frères were crowded—our friends found a table with some little difficulty. Lemercier proposed a private cabinet, which, for some reason known to himself, the Marquis declined.

Lemercier spontaneously and unrequested ordered the dinner and the wines.

While waiting for their oysters, with which, when in season, French *bon-vivants* usually commence their dinner, Lemercier looked round the *salon* with that air of inimitable, scrutinising, superb impertinence which distinguishes the Parisian dandy. Some of the ladies returned his glance coquettishly, for Lemercier was *beau garçon*; others turned aside indignantly and muttered something to the gentlemen dining with them. The said gentlemen, when old, shook their heads, and continued to eat unmoved; when young, turned briskly round, and looked at first fiercely at M. Lemercier, but, encountering his eye through the glass which he had screwed into its socket—noticing the hardihood of his countenance and the squareness of his shoulders—even they turned back to the tables, shook their heads, and continued to eat unmoved, just like the old ones.

“Ah!” cried Lemercier, sud-

denly, “here comes a man you should know, *mon cher*. He will tell you how to place your money—a rising man—a coming man—a future minister. Ah! *bon-jour*, Duplessis, *bon-jour*,” kissing his hand to a gentleman who had just entered, and was looking about him for a seat. He was evidently well and favorably known at the Trois Frères. The waiters had flocked round him, and were pointing to a table by the window, which a saturnine Englishman, who had dined off a beef-steak and potatoes, was about to vacate.

Mons. Duplessis, having first assured himself, like a prudent man, that his table was secure, having ordered his oysters, his chablis, and his *potage à la bisque*, now paced calmly and slowly across the *salon*, and halted before Lemercier.

Here let me pause for a moment, and give the reader a rapid sketch of the two Parisians.

Frederic Lemercier is dressed, somewhat too showily, in the extreme of the prevalent fashion. He wears a superb pin in his cravat—a pin worth 2000 francs; he wears rings on his fingers, *breloques* to his watch-chain. He has a warm though dark complexion, thick black eyebrows, full lips, a nose somewhat turned up, but not small, very fine large dark eyes, a bold,

open, somewhat impertinent expression of countenance—withal decidedly handsome, thanks to colouring, youth, and vivacity of '*regard*.'

Lucien Duplessis, bending over the table, glancing first with curiosity at the Marquis de Rochebriant, who leans his cheek on his hand and seems not to notice him, then concentrating his attention on Frederic Lemercier, who sits square with his hands clasped—Lucien Duplessis is somewhere between forty and fifty, rather below the middle height, slender but not slight—what in English phrase is called '*wiry*.' He is dressed with extreme simplicity: black frock-coat buttoned up; black cravat worn higher than men who follow the fashions wear their neckcloths nowadays; a hawk's eye and a hawk's beak; hair of a dull brown, very short, and wholly without curl; his cheeks thin and smoothly shaven, but he wears a moustache and imperial, plagiarised from those of his sovereign, and, like all plagiarisms, carrying the borrowed beauty to extremes, so that the points of moustache and imperial, stiffened and sharpened by cosmetics which must have been composed of iron, looked like three long stings guarding lip and jaw from invasion; a pale olive-brown complexion; eyes small, deep-sunk, calm, piercing; his expression of face at first glance not striking, except for quiet immovability. Observed more heedfully, the expression was keenly intellectual—determined about the lips, calculating about the brows: altogether the face of no ordinary man, and one not, perhaps, without fine and high qualities, concealed from the general gaze by habitual reserve, but justifying the confidence of those whom he admitted into his intimacy.

"Ah, *mon cher*," said Lemercier, "you promised to call on me yesterday at two o'clock. I waited in for you half an hour; you never came."

"No; I went first to the *Bourse*. The shares in that Company we spoke of have fallen; they will fall much lower—foolish to buy in yet; so the object of my calling on you was over. I took it for granted you would not wait if I failed my appointment. Do you go to the opera to-night?"

"I think not—nothing worth going for; besides, I have found an old friend, to whom I consecrate this evening. Let me introduce you to the Marquis de Rochebriant. Alain, M. Duplessis."

The two gentlemen bowed.

"I had the honour to be known to Monsieur your father," said Duplessis.

"Indeed," returned Rochebriant. "He had not visited Paris for many years before he died."

"It was in London I met him, at the house of the Russian Princess C——."

The Marquis coloured high, inclined his head gravely, and made no reply. Here the waiter brought the oysters and the chablis, and Duplessis retired to his own table.

"That is the most extraordinary man," said Frederic, as he squeezed the lemon over his oysters, "and very much to be admired."

"How so! I see nothing at least to admire in his face," said the Marquis, with the bluntness of a provincial.

"His face. Ah! you are a Legitimist—party prejudice. He dresses his face after the Emperor; in itself a very clever face, surely."

"Perhaps, but not an amiable one. He looks like a bird of prey."

"All clever men are birds of prey. The eagles are the heroes, and the owls the sages. Duplessis is not an eagle nor an owl. I should rather call him a falcon, except that I would not attempt to hoodwink him."

"Call him what you will," said the Marquis, indifferently; "M. Duplessis can be nothing to me."

"I'm not so sure of that," answered Frederic, somewhat nettled by the phlegm with which the Provincial regarded the pretensions of the Parisian. "Duplessis, I repeat it, is an extraordinary man. Though untitled, he descends from your old aristocracy; in fact, I believe, as his name shows, from the same stem as the Richelieus. His father was a great scholar, and I believe he has read much himself. Might have taken to literature or the bar, but his parents died fearfully poor; and some distant relations in commerce took charge of him, and devoted his talents to the *Bourse*. Seven years ago he lived in a single chamber, *au quatrième*, near the Luxembourg. He has now a hotel, not large but charming, in the Champs Elysées, worth at least 600,000 francs. Nor has he made his own fortune alone, but that of many others; some of birth as high as your own. He has the genius of riches, and knocks off a million as a poet does an ode, by the force of inspiration. He is hand-in-glove with the Ministers, and has been invited to Compiègne by the Emperor. You will find him very useful."

Alain made a slight movement of incredulous dissent, and changed the conversation to reminiscences of old schoolboy days.

The dinner at length came to a close. Frederic rang for the bill—glanced over it. "Fifty-nine francs," said he, carelessly flinging down his napoleon and a half. The Marquis silently drew forth his purse and extracted the same sum.

When they were out of the *restaurant*, Frederic proposed adjourning to his own rooms. "I can promise you an excellent cigar, one of a box given to me by an invaluable young Spaniard attached to the Embassy here. Such cigars are not to be had at Paris for money, nor even for love, seeing that women, however devoted and generous, never

offer you anything better than a cigarette. Such cigars are only to be had for friendship. Friendship is a jewel."

"I never smoke," answered the Marquis, "but I shall be charmed to come to your rooms; only don't let me encroach on your good-nature. Doubtless you have engagements for the evening."

"None till eleven o'clock, when I have promised to go to a *soirée* to which I do not offer to take you; for it is one of those Bohemian entertainments at which it would do you harm in the Faubourg to assist—at least until you have made good your position. Let me see, is not the Duchesse de Tarascon a relation of yours?"

"Yes; my poor mother's first cousin."

"I congratulate you. *Très grande dame*. She will launch you in *puro calo*, as Juno might have launched one of her young peacocks."

"There has been no acquaintance between our houses," returned the Marquis, dryly, "since the *mésalliance* of her second nuptials."

"*Mésalliance!* second nuptials! Her second husband was the Duke de Tarascon."

"A duke of the First Empire—the grandson of a butcher."

"*Diable!* you are a severe genealogist, *Monsieur le Marquis*. How can you consent to walk arm-in-arm with me, whose great-grandfather supplied bread to the same army, to which the Duke de Tarascon's grandfather furnished the meat?"

"My dear Frederic, we two have an equal pedigree, for our friendship dates from the same hour. I do not blame the Duchesse de Tarascon, for marrying the grandson of a butcher, but for marrying the son of a man made duke by an usurper. She abandoned the faith of her house and the cause of her sovereign. Therefore her marriage is a blot on our scutcheon."

Frederic raised his eyebrows, but had the tact to pursue the subject no further. He who interferes in the quarrels of relations must pass through life without a friend.

The young men now arrived at Lemercier's apartment, an *entresol* looking on the Boulevard des Italiens, consisting of more rooms than a bachelor generally requires; and though low-pitched, of good dimensions, decorated and furnished with a luxury which really astonished the provincial, though, with the high-bred pride of an Oriental, he suppressed every sign of surprise.

Florentine cabinets freshly retouched by the exquisite skill of Mombro, costly specimens of old Sèvres and Limoges; pictures and bronzes and marble statuettes—all well chosen and of great price, reflected from mirrors in Venetian frames—made a *coup d'œil* very favourable to that respect which the human mind pays to the evidences of money. Nor was comfort less studied than splendour. Thick carpets covered the floors, doubled and quilted *portières* excluded all draughts from chinks in the doors. Having allowed his friend a few minutes to contemplate and admire the *salle à manger* and *salon* which constituted his more state apartments, Frederic then conducted him into a small cabinet, fitted up with scarlet cloth and gold fringes, whereon were artistically arranged trophies of Eastern weapons and Turkish pipes with amber mouth-pieces.

There placing the Marquis at ease on a divan, and flinging himself on another, the Parisian exquisite ordered a valet, well dressed as himself, to bring coffee and liqueurs; and after vainly pressing one of his matchless cigars on his friend, indulged in his own Regalia.

"They are ten years old," said Frederic, with a tone of compassion at Alain's self-inflicted loss—"ten

years old. Born therefore about the year in which we two parted."

"When you were so hastily summoned from college," said the Marquis, "by the news of your father's illness. We expected you back in vain. Have you been at Paris ever since?"

"Ever since; my poor father died of that illness. His fortune proved much larger than was suspected—my share amounted to an income from investments in stocks, houses, &c., to upwards of 60,000 francs a-year; and as I wanted six years to my majority, of course the capital on attaining my majority would be increased by accumulation. My mother desired to keep me near her; my uncle, who was joint guardian with her, looked with disdain on our poor little provincial cottage; so promising an heir should acquire his finishing education under masters at Paris. Long before I was of age, I was initiated into politer mysteries of our capital than those celebrated by Eugene Sue. When I took possession of my fortune five years ago, I was considered a Cræsus; and really for that patriarchal time I was wealthy. Now, alas! my accumulations have vanished in my outfit; and 60,000 francs a-year is the least a Parisian can live upon. It is not only that all prices have fabulously increased, but that the dearer things become, the better people live. When I first came out, the world speculated upon me; now, in order to keep my standing, I am forced to speculate on the world. Hitherto I have not lost; Duplessis let me into a few good things this year, worth 100,000 francs or so. Cræsus consulted the Delphic Oracle. Duplessis was not alive in the time of Cræsus, or Cræsus would have consulted Duplessis."

Here there was a ring at the outer door of the apartment, and in another minute the valet ushered in

a gentleman somewhere about the age of thirty, of prepossessing countenance, and with the indefinable air of good-breeding and *usage du monde*. Frederic started up to greet cordially the new-comer, and introduced him to the Marquis under the name of "Sare Grarm-Varn."

"Decidedly," said the visitor, as he took off his paletot and seated himself beside the Marquis—"decidedly, my dear Lemerrier," said he, in very correct French, and with the true Parisian accent and intonation. "You Frenchmen merit that praise for polished ignorance of the language of barbarians which a distinguished historian bestows on the ancient Romans. Permit me, Marquis, to submit to you the consideration whether Grarm Varn is a fair rendering of my name as truthfully printed on this card."

The inscription on the card, thus drawn from its case and placed in Alain's hand, was—

MR. GRAHAM VANE,

No. — Rue D'Anjou.

The Marquis gazed at it as he might on a hieroglyphic, and passed it on to Lemerrier in discreet silence.

That gentleman made another attempt at the barbarian appellation.

"Grär—häm Varne. C'est ça! I triumph! all difficulties yield to French energy."

Here the coffee and liqueurs were served; and after a short pause the Englishman, who had very quietly been observing the silent Marquis, turned to him and said: "*Monsieur le Marquis*, I presume it was your father whom I remember as an acquaintance of my own father at Ems. It is many years ago; I was but a child. The Count de Chambord was then at that enervating little spa for the benefit of the Countess's health. If our friend Lemerrier does not mangle your name as he does mine, I understand him to say that you are the Marquis de Rochebriant."

"That is my name: it pleases me to hear that my father was among those who flocked to Ems to do homage to the royal personage who deigns to assume the title of Count de Chambord."

"My own ancestors clung to the descendants of James II. till their claims were buried in the grave of the last Stuart; and I honour the gallant men who, like your father, reverse in an exile the heir to their ancient kings."

The Englishman said this with grace and feeling; the Marquis's heart warmed to him at once.

"The first loyal *gentilhomme* I have met at Paris," thought the Legitimist; "and, oh, shame! not a Frenchman!"

Graham Vane, now stretching himself and accepting the cigar which Lemerrier offered him, said to that gentleman: "You who know your Paris by heart—everybody and everything therein worth the knowing, with many bodies and many things that are not worth it—can you inform me who and what is a certain lady who every fine day may be seen walking in a quiet spot at the outskirts of the Bois de Boulogne, not far from the Baron de Rothschild's villa? The said lady arrives at this selected spot in a dark-blue *coupe* without armorial bearings, punctually at the hour of three. She wears always the same dress, a kind of grey pearl-coloured silk, with a *cachemire* shawl. In age she may be somewhat about twenty—a year or so more or less—and has a face as haunting as a Medusa's; not, however, a face to turn a man into a stone, but rather of the two turn a stone into a man. A clear paleness, with a bloom like an alabaster lamp with the light flashing through. I borrow that illustration from Sare Scott, who applied it to Milor Bee-ron."

"I have not seen the lady you describe," answered Lemerrier, feeling humiliated by the avowal; "in

fact, I have not been in that sequestered part of the Bois for months; but I will go to-morrow: three o'clock you say—leave it to me; to-morrow evening, if she is a Parisienne, you shall know all about her. But, *mon cher*, you are not of a jealous temperament to confide your discovery to another."

"Yes, I am of a very jealous temperament," replied the Englishman; "but jealousy comes after love, and not before it. I am not in love; I am only haunted. To-morrow evening, then, shall we dine at Philippe's, seven o'clock?"

"With all my heart," said Lemer cier; "and you too, Alain."

"Thank you, no," said the Marquis, briefly; and he rose, drew on his gloves, and took up his hat.

At these signals of departure, the Englishman, who did not want tact nor delicacy, thought that he had made himself *de trop* in the *tête-à-tête* of two friends of the same age and nation; and, catching up his paletot, said hastily, "No, Marquis, do not go yet, and leave our host in solitude; for I have an engagement which presses, and only looked in at Lemer cier's for a moment, seeing the light at his windows. Permit me to hope that our acquaintance will not drop, and inform me where I may have the honour to call on you."

"Nay," said the Marquis; "I claim the right of a native to pay my respects first to the foreigner who visits our capital, and," he added in a lower tone, "who speaks so nobly of those who revere its exiles."

The Englishman saluted, and walked slowly towards the door; but on reaching the threshold turned back and made a sign to Lemer cier, unperceived by Alain.

Frederic understood the sign, and followed Graham Vane into the adjoining room, closing the door as he passed.

"My dear Lemer cier, of course

I should not have intruded on you at this hour on a mere visit of ceremony. I called to say that the Mademoiselle Duval whose address you sent me is not the right one—not the lady whom, knowing your wide range of acquaintance, I asked you to aid me in finding out."

"Not the right Duval? *Diable!* she answered your description exactly."

"Not at all."

"You said she was very pretty and young—under twenty."

"You forgot that I said she deserved that description twenty-one years ago."

"Ah, so you did; but some ladies are always young. 'Age,' says a wit in the *Figaro*, 'is a river which the women compel to reascend to its source when it has flowed onward more than twenty years.' Never mind—*soyez tranquille*—I will find your Duval yet if she is to be found. But why could not the friend who commissioned you to inquire choose a name less common? Duval! every street in Paris has a shop-door over which is inscribed the name of Duval."

"Quite true, there is the difficulty; however, my dear Lemer cier, pray continue to look out for a Louise Duval who was young and pretty twenty-one years ago—this search ought to interest me more than that which I intrusted to you to-night, respecting the pearly-robed lady: for in the last I but gratify my own whim; in the first I discharge a promise to a friend. You, so perfect a Frenchman, know the difference; honour is engaged to the first. Be sure you let me know if you find any other Madame or Mademoiselle Duval; and of course you remember your promise not to mention to any one the commission of inquiry you so kindly undertake. I congratulate you on your friendship for M. de Rochebriant. What a noble countenance and manner!"

Lemercier returned to the Marquis. "Such a pity you can't dine with us to-morrow. I fear you made but a poor dinner to-day. But it is always better to arrange the *menu* beforehand. I will send to Phillipe's to-morrow. Do not be afraid."

The Marquis paused a moment, and on his young face a proud struggle was visible. At last he said, bluntly and manfully—

"My dear Frederic, your world and mine are not and cannot be the same. Why should I be ashamed to own to my old schoolfellow that I am poor—very poor; that the dinner I have shared with you to-day is to me a criminal extravagance? I lodge in a single chamber on the fourth storey; I dine off a single *plat* at a small *restaurateur's*; the utmost income I can allow to myself does not exceed 5000 francs a-year: my fortunes I cannot hope much to improve. In his own country Alain de Rochebriant has no career."

Lemercier was so astonished by this confession that he remained for some moments silent, eyes and mouth both wide open; at length

he sprang up, embraced his friend, well-nigh sobbing, and exclaimed, "*Tant mieux pour moi!* You must take your lodging with me. I have a charming bedroom to spare. Don't say no. It will raise my own position to say I and Rochebriant keep house together. It must be so. Come here to-morrow. As for not having a career—bah! I and Duplessis will settle that. You shall be a *millionaire* in two years. Meanwhile we will join capitals: I my paltry notes, you your grand name. Settled!"

"My dear, dear Frederic," said the young noble, deeply affected, "on reflection you will see what you propose is impossible. Poor I may be without dishonour; live at another man's cost I cannot do without baseness. It does not require to be *gentilhomme* to feel that: it is enough to be a Frenchman. Come and see me when you can spare the time. There is my address. You are the only man in Paris to whom I shall be at home. *Au revoir.*" And breaking away from Lemercier's clasp, the Marquis hurried off.

CHAPTER III.

Alain reached the house in which he lodged. Externally a fine house, it had been the hotel of a great family in the old *régime*. On the first floor were still superb apartments, with ceilings painted by Le Brun, with walls on which the thick silks still seemed fresh. These rooms were occupied by a rich *agent de change*; but, like all such ancient palaces, the upper storeys were wretchedly defective even in the comforts which poor men demand nowadays: a back staircase, narrow, dirty, never lighted, dark as Erebus, led to the room occupied by the Marquis, which might be naturally occupied

by a needy student or a virtuous *grisette*. But there was to him a charm in that old hotel, and the richest *locataire* therein was not treated with a respect so ceremonious as that which attended the lodger on the fourth storey. The porter and his wife were Bretons; they came from the village of Rochebriant; they had known Alain's parents in their young days; it was their kinsman who had recommended him to the hotel which they served; so, when he paused at the lodge for his key, which he had left there, the porter's wife was in waiting for his return, and insisted on lighting him up-stairs and seeing

to his fire, for after a warm day the night had turned to that sharp biting cold which is more trying in Paris than even in London.

The old woman, running up the stairs before him, opened the door of his room, and busied herself at the fire. "Gently, my good Martha," said he, "that log suffices. I have been extravagant to-day, and must pinch for it."

"*M. le Marquis* jests," said the old woman, laughing.

"No, Martha; I am serious. I have sinned, but I shall reform. *Entre nous*, my dear friend, Paris is very dear when one sets one's foot out of doors: I must soon go back to Rochebriant."

"When *M. le Marquis* goes back to Rochebriant he must take with him a *Madame la Marquise*—some pretty angel with a suitable dot."

"A dot suitable to the ruins of Rochebriant would not suffice to repair them, Martha: give me my dressing-gown, and good-night."

"*Bon repos, M. le Marquis! beaux rêves, et bel avenir.*"

"*Bel avenir!*" murmured the young man bitterly, leaning his cheek on his hand; "what fortune fairer than the present can be mine? yet inaction in youth is more keenly felt than in age. How lightly I should endure poverty if it brought poverty's ennobling companion, Labour—denied to me! Well, well; I must go back to the old rock: on this ocean there is no sail, not even an oar, for me."

Alain de Rochebriant had not been reared to the expectation of poverty. The only son of a father whose estates were large beyond those of most nobles in modern France, his destined heritage seemed not unsuitable to his illustrious birth. Educated at a provincial academy, he had been removed at the age of sixteen to Rochebriant, and lived there simply and lonely enough, but still in a sort of feudal state,

with an aunt, an elder and unmarried sister to his father.

His father he never saw but twice after leaving college. That brilliant *seigneur* visited France but rarely, for very brief intervals, residing wholly abroad. To him went all the revenues of Rochebriant save what sufficed for the *ménage* of his son and his sister. It was the cherished belief of these two loyal natures that the Marquis secretly devoted his fortune to the cause of the Bourbons—how, they knew not, though they often amused themselves by conjecturing; and the young man, as he grew up, nursed the hope that he should soon hear that the descendant of Henri Quatre had crossed the frontier on a white charger and hoisted the old gonfalon with its *fleur de lis*. Then, indeed, his own career would be opened, and the sword of the Kerouecs drawn from its sheath. Day after day he expected to hear of revolts, of which his noble father was doubtless the soul. But the Marquis, though a sincere Legitimist, was by no means an enthusiastic fanatic. He was simply a very proud, a very polished, a very luxurious, and, though not without the kindness and generosity which were common attributes of the old French noblesse, a very selfish *grand seigneur*.

Losing his wife (who died the first year of marriage in giving birth to Alain) while he was yet very young, he had lived a frank libertine life until he fell submissive under the despotic yoke of a Russian Princess, who, for some mysterious reason, never visited her own country and obstinately refused to reside in France. She was fond of travel, and moved yearly from London to Naples, Naples to Vienna, Berlin, Madrid, Seville, Carlsbad, Baden-Baden—anywhere for caprice or change, except Paris. This fair wanderer succeeded in chaining to

herself the heart and the steps of the Marquis de Rochebriant.

She was very rich; she lived semi-royally. Hers was just the house in which it suited the Marquis to be the *enfant gâté*. I suspect that, cat-like, his attachment was rather to the house than to the person of his mistress. Not that he was domiciled with the Princess; that would have been somewhat too much against the proprieties, greatly too much against the Marquis's notions of his own dignity. He had his own carriage, his own apartments, his own *suite*, as became so grand a *seigneur*, and the lover of so grand a *dame*. His estates, mortgaged before he came to them, yielded no income sufficient for his wants; he mortgaged deeper and deeper, year after year, till he could mortgage them no more. He sold his hotel at Paris—he accepted without scruple his sister's fortune—he borrowed with equal *sans froid* the two hundred thousand francs which his son on coming of age inherited from his mother. Alain yielded that fortune to him without a murmur—nay, with pride; he thought it destined to go towards raising a regiment for the *fleur de lis*.

To do the Marquis justice, he was fully persuaded that he should shortly restore to his sister and son what he so recklessly took from them. He was engaged to be married to his princess so soon as her own husband died. She had been separated from the Prince for many years, and every year it was said he could not last a year longer. But he completed the measure of his conjugal iniquities by continuing to live; and one day, by mistake, Death robbed the lady of the Marquis instead of the Prince.

This was an accident which the Marquis had never counted upon. He was still young enough to consider himself young; in fact, one principal reason for keeping Alain

secluded in Brittany was his reluctance to introduce into the world a son "as old as myself," he would say pathetically. The news of his death, which happened at Baden after a short attack of bronchitis caught in a supper *al fresco* at the old castle, was duly transmitted to Rochebriant by the Princess; and the shock to Alain and his aunt was the greater because they had seen so little of the departed that they regarded him as a heroic myth, an impersonation of ancient chivalry, condemning himself to voluntary exile rather than do homage to usurpers. But from their grief they were soon roused by the terrible doubt whether Rochebriant could still be retained in the family. Besides the mortgagees, creditors from half the capitals in Europe sent in their claims; and all the movable effects transmitted to Alain by his father's confidential Italian valet, except sundry carriages and horses which were sold at Baden for what they would fetch, were a magnificent dressing-case, in the secret drawer of which were some bank-notes amounting to thirty thousand francs, and three large boxes containing the Marquis's correspondence, a few miniature female portraits, and a great many locks of hair.

Wholly unprepared for the ruin that stared him in the face, the young Marquis evinced the natural strength of his character by the calmness with which he met the danger, and the intelligence with which he calculated and reduced it.

By the help of the family notary in the neighbouring town, he made himself master of his liabilities and his means; and he found that, after paying all debts and providing for the interest of the mortgages, a property which ought to have realised a rental of £10,000 a-year, yielded not more than £400. Nor was even this margin safe, nor the property out of peril; for the principal

mortgagee, who was a capitalist in Paris named Louvier, having had during the life of the late Marquis more than once to wait for his half-yearly interest longer than suited his patience—and his patience was not enduring—plainly declared that if the same delay recurred he should put his right of seizure in force; and in France still more than in England, bad seasons seriously affect the security of rents. To pay away £9600 a-year regularly out of £10,000, with the penalty of forfeiting the whole if not paid, whether crops may fail, farmers procrastinate, and timber fall in price, is to live with the sword of Damocles over one's head.

For two years and more, however, Alain met his difficulties with prudence and vigour; he retrenched the establishment hitherto kept at the chateau, resigned such rural pleasures as he had been accustomed to indulge, and lived like one of his petty farmers. But the risks of the future remained undiminished.

"There is but one way, *Monsieur le Marquis*," said the family notary M. Hébert, "by which you can put your estate in comparative safety. Your father raised his mortgages from time to time, as he wanted money, and often at interest above the average market interest. You may add considerably to your income by consolidating all these mortgages into one at a lower percentage, and in so doing pay off this formidable mortgagee, M. Louvier, who, I shrewdly suspect, is bent upon becoming the proprietor of Rochebriant. Unfortunately those few portions of your land which were but lightly charged, and, lying contiguous to small proprietors, were coveted by them, and could be advantageously sold, are already gone to pay the debts of Monsieur the late Marquis. There are, however, two small farms, which, bordering close on the town of S—,

I think I could dispose of for building purposes at high rates; but these lands are covered by Monsieur Louvier's general mortgage, and he has refused to release them, unless the whole debt be paid. Were that debt therefore transferred to another mortgagee, we might stipulate for their exception, and in so doing secure a sum of more than 100,000 francs, which you could keep in reserve for a pressing or unforeseen occasion, and make the nucleus of a capital devoted to the gradual liquidation of the charges on the estate. For with a little capital, *Monsieur le Marquis*, your rent-roll might be very greatly increased, the forests and orchards improved, those meadows round S— drained and irrigated. Agriculture is beginning to be understood in Bretagne, and your estate would soon double its value in the hands of a spirited capitalist. My advice to you, therefore, is to go to Paris, employ a good *avoué*, practised in such branch of his profession, to negotiate the consolidation of your mortgages upon terms that will enable you to sell outlying portions, and so pay off the charge by instalments agreed upon;—to see if some safe Company or rich individual can be found to undertake for a term of years the management of your forests, the draining of the S— meadows, the superintendence of your fisheries, &c. They, it is true, will monopolise the profits for many years—perhaps twenty; but you are a young man; at the end of that time you will re-enter on your estate with a rental so improved that the mortgages, now so awful, will seem to you comparatively trivial."

In pursuance of this advice, the young Marquis had come to Paris fortified with a letter from M. Hébert to an *avoué* of eminence, and with many letters from his aunt to the nobles of the Faubourg connect-

ed with his house. Now one reason why M. Hébert had urged his client to undertake this important business in person, rather than volunteer his own services in Paris, was somewhat extra-professional. He had a sincere and profound affection for Alain; he felt compassion for that young life so barrenly wasted in seclusion and severe privations; he respected, but was too practical a man of business to share, those chivalrous sentiments of loyalty to an exiled dynasty which disqualified the man for the age he lived in, and, if not greatly modified, would cut him off from the hopes and aspirations of his eager generation. He thought plausibly enough that the air of the grand metropolis was necessary to the mental health, enfeebled and withering amidst the feudal mists of Bretagne; that once in Paris, Alain would imbibe the ideas of Paris, adapt himself to some career leading to honour and to fortune, for which he took facilities from his high birth, an historical name too national for any dynasty not to welcome among its adherents, and an intellect not yet sharpened by contact and competition with others, but in itself vigorous, habituated to thought, and vivified by the noble aspirations which belong to imaginative natures.

At the least, Alain would be at Paris in the social position which would afford him the opportunities of a marriage, in which his birth and rank would be readily accepted as an equivalent to some ample fortune that would serve to redeem the endangered *seigneuries*. He therefore warned Alain that the affair for which he went to Paris might be tedious, that lawyers were always slow, and advised him to calculate on remaining several months, perhaps a year; delicately suggesting that his rearing hitherto had been

too secluded for his age and rank, and that a year at Paris, even if he failed in the object which took him there, would not be thrown away in the knowledge of men and things that would fit him better to grapple with his difficulties on his return.

Alain divided his spare income between his aunt and himself, and had come to Paris resolutely determined to live within the ~~2200~~ 2200 a-year which remained to his share. He felt the revolution in his whole being which commenced when out of sight of the petty principality in which he was the object of that feudal reverence, still surviving in the more unfrequented parts of Bretagne, for the representatives of illustrious names connected with the immemorial legends of the province.

The very bustle of a railway, with its crowd and quickness and uncere- monious democracy of travel, served to pain and confound and humiliate that sense of individual dignity in which he had been nurtured. He felt that, once away from Rochebriant, he was but a cipher in the sum of human beings. Arrived at Paris, and reaching the gloomy hotel to which he had been recommended, he greeted even the desolation of that solitude which is usually so oppressive to a stranger in the metropolis of his native land. Loneliness was better than the loss of self in the reek and pressure of an unfamiliar throng. For the first few days he had wandered over Paris without calling even on the *avoué* to whom M. Hébert had directed him. He felt with the instinctive acuteness of a mind which, under sounder training, would have achieved no mean distinction, that it was a safe precaution to im- buise himself with the atmosphere of the place, seize on those general ideas which in great capitals are so contagious that they are often more

accurately caught by the first impressions than by subsequent habit, before he brought his mind into contact with those of the individuals he had practically to deal with.

At last he repaired to the *avoué*, M. Gandrin, Rue St. Florentin. He had mechanically formed his idea of the abode and person of an *avoué* from his association with M. Hébert. He expected to find a dull house in a dull street near the centre of business, remote from the haunts of idlers, and a grave man of unpretending exterior and matured years.

He arrived at a hotel newly fronted, richly decorated, in the fashionable *quartier* close by the Tuileries. He entered a wide *porte cochère*, and was directed by the *concierge* to mount *au premier*. There, first detained in an office faultlessly neat, with spruce young men at smart desks, he was at length admitted into a noble *salon*, and into the presence of a gentleman lounging in an easy-chair before a magnificent bureau of *marqueterie*, *genre Louis Seize*, engaged in patting a white curly lapdog, with a pointed nose and a shrill bark.

The gentleman rose politely on his entrance, and released the dog, who, after sniffing the Marquis, condescended not to bite.

"*Monsieur le Marquis*," said M. Gandrin, glancing at the card and the introductory note from M. Hébert, which Alain had sent in, and which lay on the *secrétaire* beside heaps of letters nicely arranged and labelled, "charmed to make the honour of your acquaintance; just arrived at Paris? So M. Hébert—a very worthy person whom I have never seen, but with whom I have had correspondence—tells me you wish for my advice; in fact, he wrote to me some days ago, mentioning the business in question—consolidation of mortgages. A very

large sum wanted, *Monsieur le Marquis*, and not to be had easily."

"Nevertheless," said Alain, quietly, "I should imagine that there must be many capitalists in Paris willing to invest in good securities at fair interest."

"You are mistaken, Marquis; very few such capitalists. Men worth money nowadays like quick returns and large profits, thanks to the magnificent system of *Crédit Mobilier*, in which, as you are aware, a man may place his money in any trade or speculation without liabilities beyond his share. Capitalists are nearly all traders or speculators."

"Then," said the Marquis, half rising, "I am to presume, sir, that you are not likely to assist me."

"No, I don't say that, Marquis. I will look with care into the matter. Doubtless you have with you an abstract of the necessary documents, the conditions of the present mortgages, the rental of the estate, its probable prospects, and so forth."

"Sir, I have such an abstract with me at Paris; and having gone into it myself with M. Hébert, I can pledge you my word that it is strictly faithful to the facts."

The Marquis said this with *naïve* simplicity, as if his words were quite sufficient to set that part of the question at rest.

M. Gandrin smiled politely and said, "*Eh bien, M. le Marquis*: favour me with the abstract; in a week's time you shall have my opinion. You enjoy Paris? Greatly improved under the Emperor; the *salons*, indeed, are hardly open yet. *A propos*, Madame Gandrin receives to-morrow evening; allow me that opportunity to present you to her."

Unprepared for the proffered hospitality, the Marquis had no option but to murmur his gratification and assent.

In a minute more he was in the streets. The next evening he went to Madame Gandrin's—a brilliant reception—a whole moving flower-bed of 'decorations' there. Having gone through the ceremony of presentation to Madame Gandrin—a handsome woman dressed to perfection, and conversing with the secretary to an embassy—the young noble ensconced himself in an obscure and quiet corner, observing all, and imagining that he escaped observation. And as the young men of his own years glided by him, or as their talk reached his ears, he became aware that from top to toe, within and without, he was old-fashioned, obsolete, not of his race, not of his day. His rank itself seemed to him a waste-paper title-deed to a heritage long lapsed. Not thus the princely *seigneurs* of Rochebriant made their *début* at the capital of their nation. They had had the *entrées* to the cabinets of their kings; they had glittered in the halls of Versailles; they had held high posts of distinction in court and camp; the great Order of St. Louis had seemed their hereditary appanage. His father, though a voluntary exile in manhood, had been in childhood a king's page, and throughout life remained the associate of princes; and here, in an *avoué's soirée*, unknown, unregarded, an expectant on an *avoué's* patronage, stood the last lord of Rochebriant.

It is easy to conceive that Alain did not stay long. But he stayed long enough to convince him that on £200 a-year the polite society of Paris, even as seen at M. Gandrin's, was not for him. Nevertheless, a day or two after, he resolved to call upon the nearest of his kinsmen to whom his aunt had given him letters. With the Count de Vandemar, one of his fellow-nobles of the sacred Faubourg, he should be no

less Rochebriant, whether in a garret or a palace. The Vandemars, in fact, though for many generations before the First Revolution a puissant and brilliant family, had always recognised the Rochebriants as the head of their house—the trunk from which they had been slipped in the fifteenth century, when a younger son of the Rochebriants married a wealthy heiress and took the title, with the lands of Vandemar.

Since then the two families had often intermarried. The present Count had a reputation for ability, was himself a large proprietor, and might furnish advice to guide him with M. Gandrin. The Hotel de Vandemar stood facing the old Hotel de Rochebriant; it was less spacious, but not less venerable, gloomy, and prison-like.

As he turned his eyes from the armorial scutcheon which still rested, though chipped and mouldering, over the portals of his lost ancestral house, and was about to cross the street, two young men, who seemed two or three years older than himself, emerged on horseback from the Hotel de Vandemar.

Handsome young men, with the lofty look of the old race, dressed with the punctilious care of person which is not foppery in men of birth, but seems part of the self-respect that appertains to the old chivalric point of honour. The horse of one of these cavaliers made a caracole which brought it nearly upon Alain as he was about to cross. The rider, checking his steed, lifted his hat to Alain and uttered a word of apology in the courtesy of ancient high-breeding, but still with condescension as to an inferior. This little incident, and the slighting kind of notice received from coevals of his own birth, and doubtless his own blood—for he divined truly that they were the sons of the

Count de Vandemar—disconcerted Alain to a degree which perhaps a Frenchman alone can comprehend. He had even half a mind to give up his visit and turn back. However, his native manhood prevailed over that morbid sensitiveness which, born out of the union of pride and poverty, has all the effects of vanity, and yet is not vanity itself.

The Count was at home, a thin spare man with a narrow but high forehead, and an expression of countenance keen, severe, and *un peu moqueuse*.

He received the Marquis, however, at first with great cordiality, kissed him on both sides of his cheek, called him "cousin," expressed immeasurable regret that the Countess was gone out on one of the missions of charity in which the great ladies of the Faubourg religiously interest themselves, and that his sons had just ridden forth to the Bois.

As Alain, however, proceeded, simply and without false shame, to communicate the object of his visit at Paris, the extent of his liabilities, and the penury of his means, the smile vanished from the Count's face; he somewhat drew back his *fauteuil* in the movement common to men who wish to estrange themselves from some other man's difficulties; and when Alain came to a close, the Count remained some moments seized with a slight cough; and, gazing intently on the carpet, at length he said, "My dear young friend, your father behaved extremely ill to you—dishonourably, fraudulently."

"Hold!" said the Marquis, colouring high. "Those are words no man can apply to my father in my presence."

The Count stared, shrugged his shoulders, and replied with *sang froid*—

"Marquis, if you are contented

with your father's conduct, of course it is no business of mine: he never injured me. I presume, however, that, considering my years and my character, you come to me for advice—is it so?"

Alain bowed his head in assent.

"There are four courses for one in your position to take," said the Count, placing the index of the right hand successively on the thumb and three fingers of the left—"four courses, and no more.

"1st. To do as your notary recommended: consolidate your mortgages, patch up your income as you best can, return to Rochebriant, and devote the rest of your existence to the preservation of your property. By that course your life will be one of permanent privation, severe struggle; and the probability is that you will not succeed: there will come one or two bad seasons, the farmers will fail to pay, the mortgagee will foreclose, and you may find yourself, after twenty years of anxiety and torment, prematurely old and without a *sou*.

"Course the 2d. Rochebriant, though so heavily encumbered as to yield you some such income as your father gave to his *chef de cuisine*, is still one of those superb *terres* which bankers and Jews and stock-jobbers court and hunt after, for which they will give enormous sums. If you place it in good hands, I do not doubt that you could dispose of the property within three months, on terms that would leave you a considerable surplus, which, invested with judgment, would afford you whereon you could live at Paris in a way suitable to your rank and age.—Need we go further?—does this course smile to you?"

"Pass on, Count; I will defend to the last what I take from my ancestors, and cannot voluntarily sell their roof-tree and their tombs."

"Your name would still remain,

and you would be just as well received in Paris, and your *noblesse* just as implicitly conceded, if all Judea encamped upon Rochebriant. Consider how few of us *gentilshommes* of the old *régime* have any domains left to us. Our names alone survive; no revolution can efface *them*."

"It may be so, but pardon me; there are subjects on which we cannot reason—we can but feel. Rochebriant may be torn from me, but I cannot yield it."

"I proceed to the third course. Keep the chateau and give up its traditions; remain *de facto* Marquis of Rochebriant, but accept the new order of things. Make yourself known to the people in power. They will be charmed to welcome you;—a convert from the old *noblesse* is a guarantee of stability of the new system. You will be placed in diplomacy; effloresce into an ambassador, a minister—and ministers nowadays have opportunities to become enormously rich."

"That course is not less impossible than the last. Till Henry V. formally resign his right to the throne of St. Louis, I can be servant to no other man seated on that throne."

"Such, too, is my creed," said the Count, "and I cling to it; but my estate is not mortgaged, and I have neither the tastes nor the age for public employments. The last course is perhaps better than the rest; at all events it is the easiest. A wealthy marriage; even if it must be a *mésalliance*. I think at your age, with your appearance, that your name is worth at least two million francs in the eyes of a rich *roturier* with an ambitious daughter."

"Alas!" said the young man, rising, "I see I shall have to go back to Rochebriant. I cannot sell my castle, I cannot sell my creed, and I cannot sell my name and myself."

"The last all of us did in the old *régime*, Marquis. Though I still retain the title of Vandemar, my property comes from the Farmer-General's daughter, whom my great-grandfather, happily for us, married in the days of Louis Quinze. Marriages with people of sense and rank have always been *mariages de convenance* in France. It is only in *le petit monde* that men having nothing marry girls having nothing, and I don't believe they are a bit the happier for it. On the contrary, the quarrels *de ménage* leading to frightful crimes appear by the '*Gazette des Tribunaux*' to be chiefly found among those who do not sell themselves at the altar."

The old Count said this with a grim *persiflage*. He was a Voltairian.

Voltairianism deserted by the modern Liberals of France has its chief cultivation nowadays among the wits of the old *régime*. They pick up its light weapons on the battle-field on which their fathers perished, and re-feather against the *canaille* the shafts which had been pointed against the *noblesse*.

"Adieu, Count," said Alain, rising; "I do not thank you less for your advice because I have not the wit to profit by it."

"*Au revoir*, my cousin; you will think better of it when you have been a month or two at Paris. By the way, my wife receives every Wednesday; consider our house yours."

"Count, can I enter into the world which *Madame la Comtesse* receives, in the way that becomes my birth, on the income I take from my fortune?"

The Count hesitated. "No," said he at last, frankly; "not because you will be less welcome or less respected, but because I see that you have all the pride and sensitiveness of a *seigneur de province*. Society

would therefore give you pain, not pleasure. More than this, I know by the remembrance of my own youth, and the sad experience of my own sons, that you would be irresistibly led into debt, and debt in your circumstances would be the loss of Rochebriant. No; I invite you to visit us. I offer you the most select but not the most brilliant circles of Paris, because my wife is religious, and frightens away the birds of gay plumage with the scarecrows of priests and bishops. But if you accept my invitation and my offer, I am bound, as an old man of the world to a young kinsman, to say that the chances are that you will be ruined."

"I thank you, Count, for your

candour; and I now acknowledge that I have found a relation and a guide," answered the Marquis, with a nobility of mien that was not without a pathos which touched the hard heart of the old man.

"Come at least whenever you want a sincere if a rude friend;" and though he did not kiss his cousin's cheek this time, he gave him, with more sincerity, a parting shake of the hand.

And these made the principal events in Alain's Paris life till he met Frederic Lemercier. Hitherto he had received no definite answer from M. Gandrin, who had postponed an interview, not having had leisure to make himself master of all the details in the abstract sent to him.

CHAPTER IV.

The next day, towards the afternoon, Frederic Lemercier, somewhat breathless from the rapidity at which he had ascended to so high an eminence, burst into Alain's chamber.

"*Pr-r ! mon cher* ; what superb exercise for the health—how it must strengthen the muscles and expand the chest; after this, who should shrink from scaling Mont Blanc?—Well, well. I have been meditating on your business ever since we parted. But I would fain know more of its details. You shall confide them to me as we drive through the Bois. My *coupé* is below, and the day is beautiful—come."

To the young Marquis, the gaiety, the heartiness of his college friend were a cordial. How different from the dry counsels of the Count de Vandemar! Hope, though vaguely, entered into his heart. Willingly he accepted Frederic's invitation, and the young men were soon rapidly borne along the Champs Elysées. As briefly as he could

Alain described the state of his affairs, the nature of his mortgages, and the result of his interview with M. Gandrin.

Frederic listened attentively. "Then Gandrin has given you as yet no answer?"

"None: but I have a note from him this morning asking me to call to-morrow."

"After you have seen him, decide on nothing—if he makes you any offer get back your abstract, or a copy of it, and confide it to me. Gandrin ought to help you; he transacts affairs in a large way. *Belle clientèle* among the *millionnaires*. But his clients expect fabulous profits, and so does he. As for your principal mortgagee, Louvier, you know of course who he is."

"No, except that M. Hébert told me that he was very rich."

"Rich—I should think so; one of the Kings of Finance. Ah! observe those young men on horse-back."

Alain looked forth and recognised

the two cavaliers whom he had conjectured to be the sons of the Count de Vandemar.

"Those *beaux garçons* are fair specimens of your Faubourg," said Frederic; "they would decline my acquaintance because my grandfather kept a shop, and they keep a shop between them!"

"A shop—I am mistaken, then. Who are they?"

"Raoul and Enguerrand, sons of that mocker of man the Count de Vandemar."

"And they keep a shop! you are jesting."

"A shop at which you may buy gloves and perfumes, Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin. Of course they don't serve at the counter; they only invest their pocket money in the speculation, and in so doing—treble at least their pocket-money, buy their horses, and keep their grooms."

"Is it possible! nobles of such birth! How shocked the Count would be if he knew it!"

"Yes, very much shocked if he was supposed to know it. But he is too wise a father not to give his sons limited allowances and unlimited liberty, especially the liberty to add to the allowances as they please. Look again at them; no better riders and more affectionate brothers since the date of Castor and Pollux. Their tastes, indeed, differ: Raoul is religious and moral, melancholy and dignified; Enguerrand is a lion of the first water,—*élégant* to the tips of his nails. These demigods are nevertheless very mild to mortals. Though Enguerrand is the best pistol-shot in Paris, and Raoul the best fencer, the first is so good-tempered that you would be a brute to quarrel with him; the last so true a Catholic, that if you quarrelled with him you need fear not his sword. He would not die in the

committal of what the Church holds a mortal sin."

"Are you speaking ironically? Do you mean to imply that men of the name of Vandemar are not brave?"

"On the contrary, I believe that, though masters of their weapons, they are too brave to abuse their skill; and I must add, that though they are sleeping partners in a shop, they would not cheat you of a farthing.—Benign stars on earth, as Castor and Pollux were in heaven."

"But partners in a shop!"

"Bah! when a minister himself, like the late M. de M——, kept a shop, and added the profits of *bon-bons* to his revenue, you may form some idea of the spirit of the age. If young nobles are not generally sleeping partners in shops, still they are more or less adventurers in commerce. The *Bourse* is the profession of those who have no other possession. You have visited the *Bourse*?"

"No."

"No! this is just the hour; we have time yet for the Bois.—Coachman, drive to the *Bourse*."

"The fact is," resumed Frederic, "that gambling is one of the wants of civilised men. The *rouge-et-noir* and *roulette* tables are forbidden—the hells closed; but the passion for making money without working for it must have its vent, and that vent is the *Bourse*. As instead of a hundred wax-lights you now have one jet of gas, so instead of a hundred hells you have now one *Bourse*, and—it is exceedingly convenient; always at hand; no discredit being seen there, as it was to be seen at Frascati's—on the contrary, at once respectable, and yet the *mode*."

The *coupé* stops at the *Bourse*, our friends mount the steps, glide through the pillars, deposit their canes at a place destined to guard them, and the Marquis follows Frederic up a flight of stairs till he gains the open gallery round a vast hall be-

low. Such a din! such a clamour! disputatious, wrangling, wrathful.

Here Lemerrier distinguished some friends, whom he joined for a few minutes.

Alain, left alone, looked down into the hall. He thought himself in some stormy scene of the First Revolution. An English contested election in the market-place of a borough when the candidates are running close on each other, the result doubtful, passions excited, the whole borough in civil war, is peaceful compared to the scene at the *Bourse*.

Bulls and bears screaming, bawling, gesticulating, as if one were about to strangle the other; the whole, to an uninitiated eye, a confusion, a Babel, which it seems absolutely impossible to reconcile to the notion of quiet mercantile transactions, the purchase and sale of shares and stocks. As Alain gazed bewildered, he felt himself gently touched, and, looking round, saw the Englishman.

"A lively scene!" whispered Mr. Vane. "This is the heart of Paris: it beats very loudly."

"Is your *Bourse* in London like this?"

"I cannot tell you; at our Exchange the general public are not admitted; the privileged priests of that temple sacrifice their victims in closed penetralia, beyond which the sounds made in the operation do not travel to ears profana. But had we an Exchange like this open to all the world, and placed, not in a region of our metropolis unknown to fashion, but in some elegant square in St. James's or at Hyde Park Corner, I suspect that our national character would soon undergo a great change, and that all our idlers and sporting-men would make their books there every day, instead of waiting long months in *ennui* for the Doncaster and the Derby. At present we have but few men on the turf; we should then have few

men not on Exchange, especially if we adopt your law, and can contrive to be traders without risk of becoming bankrupts. Napoleon I. called us a shopkeeping nation. Napoleon III. has taught France to excel us in everything, and certainly he has made Paris a shopkeeping city."

Alain thought of Raoul and Enguerrand, and blushed to find that what he considered a blot on his countrymen was so familiarly perceptible to a foreigner's eye.

"And the Emperor has done wisely, at least for the time," continued the Englishman, with a more thoughtful accent. "He has found vent thus for that very dangerous class in Paris society to which the subdivision of property gave birth—viz, the crowd of well-born, daring young men without fortune and without profession. He has opened the *Bourse* and said, 'There, I give you employment, resource, an *avenir*.' He has cleared the byways into commerce and trade, and opened new avenues of wealth to the *noblesse*, whom the great Revolution so unwisely beggared. What other way to rebuild a *noblesse* in France, and give it a chance of power because an access to fortune! But to how many sides of your national character has the *Bourse* of Paris magnetic attraction? You Frenchmen are so brave that you could not be happy without facing danger, so covetous of distinction that you would pine yourselves away without a dash, *coûte que coûte*, at celebrity and a red ribbon. Danger! look below at that arena—there it is; danger daily, hourly. But there also is celebrity; win at the *Bourse*, as of old in a tournament, and paladins smile on you, and ladies give you their scarves, or, what is much the same, they allow you to buy their *cachemires*. Win at the *Bourse*—what follows? the Chamber,

the Senate, the Cross, the Minister's *portefeuille*. I might rejoice in all this for the sake of Europe—could it last, and did it not bring the consequences that follow the demoralisation which attends it. The *Bourse* and the *Crédit Mobilier* keep Paris quiet—at least as quiet as it can be. These are the secrets of this reign of splendour; these the two *lions couchants* on which rests the throne of the Imperial reconstructor."

Alain listened surprised and struck. He had not given the Englishman credit for the cast of mind which such reflections evinced.

Here Lemercier rejoined them, and shook hands with Graham Vane, who, taking him aside, said, "But you promised to go to the Bois, and indulge my insane curiosity about the lady in the pearl-coloured robe?"

"I have not forgotten; it is not half-past two yet; you said three. *Soyez tranquille*; I drive thither from the *Bourse* with Rochebriant."

"Is it necessary to take with you that very good-looking Marquis?"

"I thought you said you were not jealous, because not yet in love. However, if Rochebriant occasions you the pang which your humble servant failed to inflict, I will take care that he do not see the lady."

"No," said the Englishman; "on consideration, I should be very much obliged to any one with whom she would fall in love. That would disenchant me. Take the Marquis by all means."

Meanwhile Alain, again looking down, saw just under him, close by one of the pillars, Lucien Duplessis. He was standing apart from the throng—a small space cleared round himself—and two men who had the air of a gentlemen of the *beau monde*, with whom he was conferring. Duplessis, thus seen, was not like the

Duplessis at the *restaurant*. It would be difficult to explain what the change was, but it forcibly struck Alain: the air was more dignified, the expression keener; there was a look of conscious power and command about the man even at that distance; the intense, concentrated intelligence of his eye, his firm lip, his marked features, his projecting, massive brow,—would have impressed a very ordinary observer. In fact, the man was here in his native element—in the field in which his intellect gloried, commanded, and have signalised itself by successive triumphs. Just thus may be the change in the great orator whom you deemed insignificant in a drawing-room, when you see his crest rise above a reverential audience; or the great soldier, who was not distinguishable from the subaltern in a peaceful club, could you see him issuing the order to his aides-de-camp amidst the smoke and roar of the battle-field.

"Ah, Marquis!" said Graham Vane, "are you gazing at Duplessis? He is the modern genius of Paris. He is at once the Cousin, the Guizot, and the Victor Hugo of speculation. Philosophy—Eloquence—audacious Romance;—all Literature now is swallowed up in the sublime epic of *Agiotage*, and Duplessis is the poet of the Empire."

"Well said, M. Grarm Varn," cried Frederic, forgetting his recent lesson in English names. "Alain underrates that great man. How could an Englishman appreciate him so well?"

"*Ma foi!*" returned Graham, quietly; "I am studying to think at Paris, in order some day or other to know how to act in London. Time for the Bois. Lemercier, we meet at seven—Philippe's."

CHAPTER V.

"What do you think of the *Bourse*?" asked Lemercier, as their carriage took the way to the Bois.

"I cannot think of it yet; I am stunned. It seems to me as if I had been at a *Sabbat*, of which the wizards were *agents de change*, but not less bent upon raising Satan."

"Pooh! the best way to exorcise Satan is to get rich enough not to be tempted by him. The fiend always loved to haunt empty places; and of all places nowadays he prefers empty purses and empty stomachs."

"But do all people get rich at the *Bourse*? or is not one man's wealth many men's ruin?"

"That is a question not very easy to answer; but under our present system Paris gets rich, though at the expense of individual Parisians. I will try and explain. The average luxury is enormously increased even in my experience; what were once considered refinements and fopperies are now called necessary comforts. Prices are risen enormously,—house-rent doubled within the last five or six years; all articles of luxury are very much dearer; the very gloves I wear cost twenty per cent more than I used to pay for gloves of the same quality. How the people we meet live, and live so well, is an enigma that would defy *Œdipus* if *Œdipus* were not a Parisian. But the main explanation is this: speculation and commerce, with the facilities given to all investments, have really opened more numerous and more rapid ways to fortune than were known a few years ago.

"Crowds are thus attracted to Paris, resolved to venture a small capital in the hope of a large one; they live on that capital, not on their income, as gamblers do. There is an idea among us that it is necessary to

seem rich in order to become rich. Thus there is a general extravagance and profusion. English *milords* marvel at our splendour. Those who, while spending their capital as their income, fail in their schemes of fortune, after one, two, three, or four years—vanish. What becomes of them, I know no more than I do what becomes of the old moons. Their place is immediately supplied by new candidates. Paris is thus kept perennially sumptuous and splendid by the gold it engulfs. But then some men succeed—succeed prodigiously, preternaturally; they make colossal fortunes, which are magnificently expended. They set an example of show and pomp, which is of course the more contagious because so many men say, 'The other day those *millionaires* were as poor as we are; they never economised; why should we?' Paris is thus doubly enriched—by the fortunes it swallows up, and by the fortunes it casts up; the last being always reproductive, and the first never lost except to the individuals."

"I understand: but what struck me forcibly at the scene we have left was the number of young men there; young men whom I should judge by their appearance to be gentlemen, evidently not mere speculators—eager, anxious, with tablets in their hands. That old or middle-aged men should find a zest in the pursuit of gain I can understand, but youth and avarice seem to me a new combination, which Molière never divined in his '*Avare*.'"

"Young men, especially if young gentlemen, love pleasure; and pleasure in this city is very dear. This explains why so many young men frequent the *Bourse*. In the old gaming-tables now suppressed, young

men were the majority ; in the days of your chivalrous forefathers it was the young nobles, not the old, who would stake their very mantles and swords on a cast of the die. And naturally enough, *mon cher* ; for is not youth the season of hope, and is not hope the goddess of gaming, whether at *rouge et noir* or the *Bourse* ?”

Alain felt himself more and more behind his generation. The acute reasoning of Lemercier humbled his *amour propre*. At college Lemercier was never considered Alain's equal in ability or book-learning. What a stride beyond his school-fellow had Lemercier now made ! How dull and stupid the young provincial felt himself to be as compared with the easy cleverness and half-sportive philosophy of the Parisian's fluent talk !

He sighed with a melancholy and yet with a generous envy. He had too fine a natural perception not to acknowledge that there is a rank of mind as well as of birth, and in the first he felt that Lemercier might well walk before a Rochebriant ; but his very humility was a proof that he underrated himself.

Lemercier did not excel him in mind, but in experience. And just as the drilled soldier seems a much finer fellow than the raw recruit, because he knows how to carry himself, but after a year's discipline the raw recruit may excel in martial air the upright hero whom he now despairingly admires, and never dreams he can rival ; so set a mind from a village into the drill of a capital, and see it a year after ; it may tower a head higher than its recruiting sergeant.

CHAPTER VI.

“I believe,” said Lemercier, as the *coupé* rolled through the lively alleys of the Bois de Boulogne, “that Paris is built on a loadstone, and that every Frenchman with some iron globules in his blood is irresistibly attracted towards it. The English never seem to feel for London the passionate devotion that we feel for Paris. On the contrary, the London middle class, the commercialists, the shopkeepers, the clerks, even the superior artisans compelled to do their business in the capital, seem always scheming and pining to have their home out of it, though but in a suburb.”

“You have been in London, Frederic ?”

“Of course ; it is the *mode* to visit that dull and hideous metropolis.”

“If it be dull and hideous, no wonder the people who are compelled to do business in it seek the pleasures of home out of it.”

“It is very droll that though the middle class entirely govern the melancholy Albion, it is the only country in Europe in which the middle class seem to have no amusements ; nay, they legislate against amusement. They have no leisure-day but Sunday ; and on that day they close all their theatres,—even their museums and picture-galleries. What amusements there may be in England are for the higher classes and the lowest.”

“What are the amusements of the lowest class ?”

“Getting drunk.”

“Nothing else ?”

“Yes, I was taken at night under protection of a policeman to some *cabarets*, where I found crowds of that class which is the stratum below the working class ; lads who sweep crossings and hold horses, mendicants, and, I was told, thieves, girls whom a servant-maid

would not speak to—very merry—dancing quadrilles and waltzes, and regaling themselves on sausages—the happiest looking folks I found in all London—and, I must say, conducting themselves very decently.

"Ah!" Here Lemercier pulled the check-string. "Will you object to a walk in this quiet alley? I see some one whom I have promised the Englishman to— But heed me, Alain; don't fall in love with her."

CHAPTER VII.

The lady in the pearl-coloured dress! Certainly it was a face that might well arrest the eye and linger long on the remembrance.

There are certain 'beauty-women' as there are certain 'beauty-men,' in whose features one detects no fault—who are the show figures of any assembly in which they appear—but who, somehow or other, inspire no sentiment and excite no interest; they lack some expression, whether of mind, or of soul, or of heart, without which the most beautiful face is but a beautiful picture. This lady was not one of those 'beauty-women.' Her features taken singly were by no means perfect, nor were they set off by any brilliancy of colouring. But the countenance aroused and impressed the imagination with a belief that there was some history attached to it which you longed to learn. The hair, simply parted over a forehead unusually spacious and high for a woman, was of lustrous darkness; the eyes, of a deep violet blue, were shaded with long lashes.

Their expression was soft and mournful, but unobservant. She did not notice Alain and Lemercier as the two men slowly passed her. She seemed abstracted, gazing into space as one absorbed in thought or reverie. Her complexion was clear and pale, and apparently betokened delicate health.

Lemercier seated himself on a bench beside the path, and invited Alain to do the same. "She will return this way soon," said the

Parisian, "and we can observe her more attentively and more respectfully thus seated than if we were on foot; meanwhile, what do you think of her? Is she French—is she Italian?—can she be English?"

"I should have guessed Italian, judging by the darkness of the hair and the outline of the features; but do Italians have so delicate a fairness of complexion?"

"Very rarely; and I should guess her to be French, judging by the intelligence of her expression, the simple neatness of her dress, and by that nameless refinement of air in which a *Parisienne* excels all the descendants of Eve—if it were not for her eyes. I never saw a French-woman with eyes of that peculiar shade of blue; and if a French-woman had such eyes, I flatter myself she would have scarcely allowed us to pass without making some use of them."

"Do you think she is married?" asked Alain.

"I hope so—for a girl of her age, if *comme il faut*, can scarcely walk alone in the Bois, and would not have acquired that look so intelligent—more than intelligent—so poetic."

"But regard that air of unmis-takable distinction, regard that expression of face—so pure, so virginal: *comme il faut* she must be."

As Alain said these last words, the lady, who had turned back, was approaching them, and in full view of their gaze. She seemed unconscious of their existence as before,

ed with his house. Now one reason why M. Hébert had urged his client to undertake this important business in person, rather than volunteer his own services in Paris, was somewhat extra-professional. He had a sincere and profound affection for Alain; he felt compassion for that young life so barrenly wasted in seclusion and severe privations; he respected, but was too practical a man of business to share, those chivalrous sentiments of loyalty to an exiled dynasty which disqualified the man for the age he lived in, and, if not greatly modified, would cut him off from the hopes and aspirations of his eager generation. He thought plausibly enough that the air of the grand metropolis was necessary to the mental health, enfeebled and withering amidst the feudal mists of Bretagne; that once in Paris, Alain would imbibe the ideas of Paris, adapt himself to some career leading to honour and to fortune, for which he took facilities from his high birth, an historical name too national for any dynasty not to welcome among its adherents, and an intellect not yet sharpened by contact and competition with others, but in itself vigorous, habituated to thought, and vivified by the noble aspirations which belong to imaginative natures.

At the least, Alain would be at Paris in the social position which would afford him the opportunities of a marriage, in which his birth and rank would be readily accepted as an equivalent to some ample fortune that would serve to redeem the endangered *seigneuries*. He therefore warned Alain that the affair for which he went to Paris might be tedious, that lawyers were always slow, and advised him to calculate on remaining several months, perhaps a year; delicately suggesting that his rearing hitherto had been

too secluded for his age and rank, and that a year at Paris, even if he failed in the object which took him there, would not be thrown away in the knowledge of men and things that would fit him better to grapple with his difficulties on his return.

Alain divided his spare income between his aunt and himself, and had come to Paris resolutely determined to live within the ~~1500~~ 2000 a-year which remained to his share. He felt the revolution in his whole being which commenced when out of sight of the petty principality in which he was the object of that feudal reverence, still surviving in the more unfrequented parts of Bretagne, for the representatives of illustrious names connected with the immemorial legends of the province.

The very bustle of a railway, with its crowd and quickness and unceremonious democracy of travel, served to pain and confound and humiliate that sense of individual dignity in which he had been nurtured. He felt that, once away from Rochebriant, he was but a cipher in the sum of human beings. Arrived at Paris, and reaching the gloomy hotel to which he had been recommended, he greeted even the desolation of that solitude which is usually so oppressive to a stranger in the metropolis of his native land. Loneliness was better than the loss of self in the reek and pressure of an unfamiliar throng. For the first few days he had wandered over Paris without calling even on the *avoué* to whom M. Hébert had directed him. He felt with the instinctive acuteness of a mind which, under sounder training, would have achieved no mean distinction, that it was a safe precaution to imbue himself with the atmosphere of the place, seize on those general ideas which in great capitals are so contagious that they are often more

accurately caught by the first impressions than by subsequent habit, before he brought his mind into contact with those of the individuals he had practically to deal with.

At last he repaired to the *avoué*, M. Gandrin, Rue St. Florentin. He had mechanically formed his idea of the abode and person of an *avoué* from his association with M. Hébert. He expected to find a dull house in a dull street near the centre of business, remote from the haunts of idlers, and a grave man of unpretending exterior and matured years.

He arrived at a hotel newly fronted, richly decorated, in the fashionable *quartier* close by the Tuileries. He entered a wide *porte cochère*, and was directed by the *concierge* to mount *au premier*. There, first detained in an office faultlessly neat, with spruce young men at smart desks, he was at length admitted into a noble *salon*, and into the presence of a gentleman lounging in an easy-chair before a magnificent bureau of *marqueterie*, *genre Louis Seize*, engaged in patting a white curly lapdog, with a pointed nose and a shrill bark.

The gentleman rose politely on his entrance, and released the dog, who, after sniffing the Marquis, condescended not to bite.

"*Monsieur le Marquis*," said M. Gandrin, glancing at the card and the introductory note from M. Hébert, which Alain had sent in, and which lay on the *secrétaire* beside heaps of letters nicely arranged and labelled, "charmed to make the honour of your acquaintance; just arrived at Paris? So M. Hébert—a very worthy person whom I have never seen, but with whom I have had correspondence—tells me you wish for my advice; in fact, he wrote to me some days ago, mentioning the business in question—consolidation of mortgages. A very

large sum wanted, *Monsieur le Marquis*, and not to be had easily."

"Nevertheless," said Alain, quietly, "I should imagine that there must be many capitalists in Paris willing to invest in good securities at fair interest."

"You are mistaken, Marquis; very few such capitalists. Men worth money nowadays like quick returns and large profits, thanks to the magnificent system of *Crédit Mobilier*, in which, as you are aware, a man may place his money in any trade or speculation without liabilities beyond his share. Capitalists are nearly all traders or speculators."

"Then," said the Marquis, half rising, "I am to presume, sir, that you are not likely to assist me."

"No, I don't say that, Marquis. I will look with care into the matter. Doubtless you have with you an abstract of the necessary documents, the conditions of the present mortgages, the rental of the estate, its probable prospects, and so forth."

"Sir, I have such an abstract with me at Paris; and having gone into it myself with M. Hébert, I can pledge you my word that it is strictly faithful to the facts."

The Marquis said this with *naïve* simplicity, as if his words were quite sufficient to set that part of the question at rest.

M. Gandrin smiled politely and said, "*Eh bien, M. le Marquis*: favour me with the abstract; in a week's time you shall have my opinion. You enjoy Paris? Greatly improved under the Emperor; the *salons*, indeed, are hardly open yet. *A propos*, Madame Gandrin receives to-morrow evening; allow me that opportunity to present you to her."

Unprepared for the proffered hospitality, the Marquis had no option but to murmur his gratification and assent.

gling. The great *Maestro* has been most gracious.

In what a radiant atmosphere his genius lives and breathes! Even in his cynical moods, his very cynicism has in it the ring of a jocund music—the laugh of Figaro, not of Mephistopheles.

We went to dine with him last week; he invited to meet us Madame S——, who has this year conquered all opposition, and reigns alone, the great S——. Mr. T——, a pianist of admirable promise—your friend M. Savarin, wit, critic, and poet, with his pleasant sensible wife, and a few others whom the *Maestro* confided to me in a whisper, were authorities in the press. After dinner S—— sang to us, magnificently, of course. Then she herself graciously turned to me, said how much she had heard from the *Maestro* in my praise, and so-and-so. I was persuaded to sing after her. I need not say to what disadvantage. But I forgot my nervousness; I forgot my audience; I forgot myself, as I always do when once my soul, as it were, finds wing in music, and buoys itself in air, relieved from the sense of earth. I knew not that I had succeeded till I came to a close, and then my eyes resting on the face of the grand *prima donna*, I was seized with an indescribable sadness—with a keen pang of remorse. Perfect *artiste* though she be, and with powers in her own realm of art which admit of no living equal, I saw at once that I had pained her; she had grown almost livid; her lips were quivering, and it was only with a great effort that she muttered out some faint words intended for applause. I comprehended by an instinct how gradually there can grow upon the mind of an artist the most generous that jealousy which makes the fear of a rival annihilate the delight in art. If

ever I should achieve S——'s fame as a singer, should I feel the same jealousy? I think not now, but I have not been tested. She went away abruptly. I spare you the recital of the compliments paid to me by my other auditors, compliments that gave me no pleasure; for on all lips, except those of the *Maestro*, they implied, as the height of eulogy, that I had inflicted torture upon S——. "If so," said he, "she would be as foolish as a rose that was jealous of the whiteness of a lily. You would do yourself great wrong, my child, if you tried to vie with the rose in its own color."

He patted my bended head as he spoke, with that kind of fatherly king-like fondness with which he honours me; and I took his hand in mine, and kissed it gratefully. "Nevertheless," said Savarin, "when the lily comes out there will be a furious attack on it, made by the clique that devotes itself to the rose: a lily clique will be formed *en revanche*, and I foresee a fierce paper war. Do not be frightened at its first outburst; every fame worth having must be fought for."

Is it so? have you had to fight for your fame, Eulalie? and do you hate all contest as much as I do?

Our only other gaiety since I last wrote was a *soirée* at M. Louvier's. That republican *millionaire* was not slow in attending to the kind letter you addressed to him recommending us to his civilities. He called at once, placed his good offices at our disposal, took charge of my modest fortune, which he has invested, no doubt, as safely as it is advantageously in point of interest, hired our carriage for us, and in short has been most amiably useful.

At his house we met many to me most pleasant, for they spoke with such genuine appreciation of your works and yourself. But there were others whom I should never have

expected to meet under the roof of a Croesus who has so great a stake in the order of things established. One young man—a noble whom he specially presented to me, as a politician who would be at the head of affairs when the Red Republic was established—asked me whether I did not agree with him that all private property was public spoliation, and that the great enemy to civilisation was religion, no matter in what form?

He addressed to me these tremendous questions with an effeminate lisp, and harangued on them with small feeble gesticulations of pale dainty fingers covered with rings.

I asked him if there were many who in France shared his ideas.

"Quite enough to carry them some day," he answered, with a lofty smile. "And the day may be nearer than the world thinks, when my *confrères* will be so numerous that they will have to shoot down each other for the sake of cheese to their bread."

That day nearer than the world thinks! Certainly, so far as one may judge the outward signs of the world at Paris, it does not think of such things at all. With what an air of self-content the beautiful city parades her riches! Who can gaze on her splendid palaces, her gorgeous shops, and believe that she will give ear to doctrines that would annihilate private rights of property; or who can enter her crowded churches, and dream that she can ever again instal a republic too civilised for religion?

Adieu. Excuse me for this dull letter. If I have written on much that has little interest even for me, it is that I wish to distract my mind from brooding over the question that interests me most, and on which I most need your counsel. I will try to approach it in my next.

ISAURA.

From the Same to the Same.

Eulalie, Eulalie!—what mocking spirit has been permitted in this modern age of ours to place in the heart of woman the ambition which is the prerogative of men?—You indeed, so richly endowed with a man's genius, have a right to man's aspirations. But what can justify such ambition in me? Nothing but this one unintellectual perishable gift of a voice that does but please in uttering the thoughts of others. Doubtless I could make a name familiar for its brief time to the talk of Europe—a name, what name? a singer's name. Once I thought that name a glory. Shall I ever forget the day when you first shone upon me; when, emerging from childhood as from a dim and solitary by-path, I stood forlorn on the great thoroughfare of life, and all the prospects before me stretched sad in mists and in rain? You beamed on me then as the sun coming out from the cloud and changing the face of earth; you opened to my sight the fairy-land of poetry and art; you took me by the hand and said, "Courage! there is at each step some green gap in the hedges, some soft escape from the stony thoroughfare. Beside the real life expands the ideal life to those who seek it. Droop not, seek it; the ideal life has its sorrows, but it never admits despair; as on the ear of him who follows the winding course of a stream, the stream ever varies the note of its music, now loud with the rush of the falls, now low and calm as it glides by the level marge of smooth banks; now sighing through the stir of the reeds, now babbling with a fretful joy as some sudden curve on the shore stays its flight among gleaming pebbles:—so to the soul of the artist is the voice of the art ever fleeting beside and before

him. Nature gave thee the bird's gift of song—raise the gift into art and make the art thy companion.

"Art and Hope were twin-born, and they die together."

See how faithfully I remember, methinks, your very words. But the magic of the words, which I then but dimly understood, was in your smile and in your eye, and the queen-like wave of your hand as if beckoning to a world which lay before you, visible and familiar as your native land. And how devotedly, with what earnestness of passion, I gave myself up to the task of raising my gift into an art! I thought of nothing else, dreamed of nothing else; and oh, how sweet to me then were words of praise. "Another year yet," at length said the masters, "and you ascend your throne among the queens of song." Then—then—I would have changed for no other throne on earth my hope of that to be achieved in the realms of my art. And then came that long fever: my strength broke down, and the *Maestro* said, "Rest, or your voice is gone, and your throne is lost forever." How hateful that rest seemed to me! You again came to my aid. You said, "The time you think lost should be but time improved. Penetrate your mind with other songs than the trash of *Libretti*. The more you habituate yourself to the forms, the more you imbue yourself with the spirit, in which passions have been expressed and character delineated by great writers, the more completely you will accomplish yourself in your own special art of singer and actress." So, then, you allured me to a new study. Ah! in so doing did you dream that you diverted me from the old ambition? My knowledge of French and Italian, and my rearing in childhood, which had made English familiar to me,

gave me the keys to the treasure-houses of three languages. Naturally I began with that in which your masterpieces are composed. Till then I had not even read your works. They were the first I chose. How they impressed, how they startled me! what depths in the mind of man, in the heart of woman, they revealed to me! But I owed to you then, and I repeat it now, neither they nor any of the works in romance and poetry which form the boast of recent French literature, satisfied yearnings for that calm sense of beauty, that divine joy in a world beyond this world, which you had led me to believe it was the prerogative of ideal art to bestow. And when I told you this with the rude frankness you had bid me exercise in talk with you, a thoughtful melancholy shade fell over your face, and you said quietly, "You are right, child; we, the French of our time, are the offspring of revolutions that settled nothing, unsettled all: we resemble those troubled States which rush into war abroad in order to re-establish peace at home. Our books suggest problems to men for reconstructing some social system in which the calm that belongs to art may be found at last: but such books should not be in your hands; they are not for the innocence and youth of women, as yet unchanged by the systems which exist." And the next day you brought me Tasso's great poem, the *Gerusalemme Liberata*, and said smiling, "Art in its calm is here."

You remember that I was then at Sorrento by the order of my physician. Never shall I forget the soft autumn day when I sat amongst the lonely rocklets to the left of the town—the sea before me, with scarce a ripple; my very heart steeped in the melodies of that poem, so marvellous for a strength disguised in

sweetness, and for a symmetry in which each proportion blends into the other with the perfectness of a Grecian statue. The whole place seemed to me filled with the presence of the poet to whom it had given birth. Certainly the reading of that poem formed an era in my existence; to this day I cannot acknowledge the faults or weaknesses which your criticisms pointed out—I believe because they are in unison with my own nature, which yearns for harmony, and, finding that, rests contented. I shrink from violent contrasts, and can discover nothing tame and insipid in a continuance of sweetness and serenity. But it was not till after I had read *La Gerusalemme* again and again, and then sat and brooded over it, that I recognised the main charm of the poem in the religion which clings to it as the perfume clings to a flower—a religion sometimes melancholy, but never to me sad. Hope always pervades it. Surely, if, as you said, “Hope is twin-born with art,” it is because art at its highest blends itself unconsciously with religion, and proclaims its affinity with hope by its faith in some future good more perfect than it has realised in the past.

Be this as it may, it was in this poem so pre-eminently Christian that I found the something which I missed and craved for in modern French masterpieces, even yours—a something spiritual, speaking to my own soul, calling it forth; distinguishing it as an essence apart from mere human reason; soothing, even when it excited; making earth nearer to heaven. And when I ran on in this strain to you after my own wild fashion, you took my head between your hands and kissed me, and said, “Happy are those who believe! long may that

happiness be thine!” Why did I not feel in Dante the Christian charm that I felt in Tasso? Dante in your eyes, as in those of most judges, is infinitely the greater genius, but reflected on the dark stream of that genius the stars are so troubled, the heavens so threatening.

Just as my year of holiday was expiring, I turned to English literature; and Shakespeare, of course, was the first English poet put into my hands. It proves how childlike my mind still was, that my earliest sensation in reading him was that of disappointment. It was not only that, despite my familiarity with English (thanks chiefly to the care of him whom I call my second father), there is much in the metaphorical diction of ‘Shakespeare which I failed to comprehend; but he seemed to me so far like the modern French writers who affect to have found inspiration in his muse, that he obtrudes images of pain and suffering without cause or motive sufficiently clear to ordinary understandings, as I had taught myself to think it ought to be in the drama.

He makes Fate so cruel that we lose sight of the mild deity behind her. Compare, in this, Corneille’s ‘*Polyeucte*’ with the ‘*Hamlet*.’ In the first an equal calamity befalls the good, but in their calamity they are blessed. The death of the martyr is the triumph of his creed. But when we have put down the English tragedy—when Hamlet and Ophelia are confounded in death with Polonius and the fratricidal king, we see not what good end for humanity is achieved. The passages that fasten on our memory do not make us happier and holier; they suggest but terrible problems, to which they give us no solution.

In the ‘*Horaces*’ of Corneille there are fierce contests, rude pas-

sions, tears drawn from some of the bitterest sources of human pity; but then through all stands out, large and visible to the eyes of all spectators, the great ideal of devoted patriotism. How much of all that has been grandest in the life of France, redeeming even its worst crimes of revolution in the love of country, has had its origin in the 'Horaces' of Corneille. But I doubt if the fates of Coriolanus, and Caesar, and Brutus, and Antony, in the giant tragedies of Shakespeare have made Englishmen more willing to die for England. In fine, it was long before—I will not say I understood or rightly appreciated Shakespeare, for no Englishman would admit that I or even you could ever do so—but before I could recognise the justice of the place his country claims for him as the genius without an equal in the literature of Europe. Meanwhile the ardour I had put into study, and the wear and tear of the emotions which the study called forth, made themselves felt in a return of my former illness, with symptoms still more alarming; and when the year was out I was ordained to rest for perhaps another year before I could sing in public, still less appear on the stage. How I rejoiced when I heard that fiat, for I emerged from that year of study with a heart utterly estranged from the profession in which I had centred my hopes before—. Yes, Eulalia, you had bid me accomplish myself for the arts of utterance by the study of arts in which thoughts originate the words they employ, and in doing so—I had changed myself into another being. I was forbidden all fatigue of mind; my books were banished, but not the new self which the books had formed. Recovering slowly through the summer, I came hither two months since, ostensibly for the advice of Dr.

C—, but really in the desire to commune with my own heart, and be still.

And now I have poured forth that heart to you—would you persuade me still to be a singer? If you do, remember at least how jealous and absorbing the art of the singer and of the actress is. How completely I must surrender myself to it, and live among books, or among dreams, no more. Can I be anything else but singer? and if not, should I be contented merely to read and to dream?

I must confide to you one ambition which during the lazy Italian summer took possession of me—I must tell you the ambition, and add that I have renounced it as a vain one. I had hoped that I could compose, I mean in music. I was pleased with some things I did—they expressed in music what I could not express in words; and one secret object in coming here was to submit them to the great *Maestro*. He listened to them patiently; he complimented me upon my accuracy in the mechanical laws of composition; he even said that my favorite airs were "*touchants et gracieux*."

And so he would have left me, but I stopped him timidly, and said, "Tell me frankly, do you think that with time and study I could compose music such as singers equal to myself could sing to?"

"You mean as a professional composer?"

"Well, yes."

"And to the abandonment of your vocation as a singer?"

"Yes."

"My dear child, I should be your worst enemy if I encouraged such a notion; cling to the career in which you can be greatest; gain but health, and I wager my reputation on your glorious success on the stage. What can you be as a composer?"

You will set pretty music to pretty words, and will be sung in drawing-rooms with the fame a little more or less that generally attends the compositions of female amateurs. Aim at something higher, as I know you would do, and you will not succeed. Is there any instance in modern times, perhaps in any times, of a female composer who attains even to the eminence of a third-rate opera writer? Composition in letters may be of no sex. In that Madame Dudevant and your friend Madame de Grantmesnil can beat most men; but the genius of musical composition is *homme*, and accept it as a compliment when I say that you are essentially *femme*."

He left me, of course, mortified and humbled; but I feel he is right as regards myself, though whether in his depreciation of our whole sex I cannot say. But as this hope has left me, I have become more disquieted, still more restless. Counsel me, Eulalie; counsel, and, if possible, comfort me.

ISAURA.

From the Same to the Same.

No letter from you yet, and I have left you in peace for ten days. How do you think I have spent them? The *Maestro* called on us with M. Savarin, to insist on our accompanying them on a round of the theatres. I had not been to one since my arrival. I divined that the kind-hearted composer had a motive in this invitation. He thought that in witnessing the applauses bestowed on actors, and sharing in the fascination in which theatrical illusion holds an audience, my old passion for the stage, and with it the longing for an *artiste's* fame, would revive.

In my heart I wished that his expectations might be realised.

Well for me if I could once more concentrate all my aspirations on a prize within my reach!

We went first to see a comedy greatly in vogue, and the author thoroughly understands the French stage of our day. The acting was excellent in its way. The next night we went to the *Odéon*, a romantic melodrama in six acts, and I know not how many *tableaux*. I found no fault with the acting there. I do not give you the rest of our programme. We visited all the principal theatres, reserving the opera and Madame S—— for the last. Before I speak of the opera, let me say a word or two on the plays.

There is no country in which the theatre has so great a hold on the public as in France; no country in which the successful dramatist has so high a fame; no country perhaps in which the state of the stage so faithfully represents the moral and intellectual condition of the people. I say this not, of course, from my experience of countries which I have not visited, but from all I hear of the stage in Germany and in England.

The impression left on my mind by the performances I witnessed is, that the French people are becoming dwarfed. The comedies that please them are but pleasant caricatures of petty sections in a corrupt society. They contain no large types of human nature; their witticisms convey no luminous flashes of truth; their sentiment is not pure and noble—it is a sickly and false perversion of the impure and ignoble into travesties of the pure and noble.

Their melodramas cannot be classed as literature—all that really remains of the old French genius is its *vaudeville*.

Great dramatists create great parts. One great part, such as a

Rachel would gladly have accepted, I have not seen in the dramas of the young generation.

High art has taken refuge in the opera; but that is not French opera. I do not complain so much that French taste is less refined. I complain that French intellect is lowered. The descent from Polyucte to Ruy Blas is great, not so much in the poetry of form as in the elevation of thought; but the descent from Ruy Blas to the best drama now produced is out of poetry altogether, and into those flats of prose which give not even the glimpse of a mountain-top.

But now to the opera. S—— in Norma! The house was crowded, and its enthusiasm as loud as it was genuine. You tell me that S—— never rivalled Pasta, but certainly her Norma is a great performance. Her voice has lost less of its freshness than I had been told, and what is lost of it her practised management conceals or carries off.

The *Maestro* was quite right—I could never vie with her in her own line; but conceited and vain as I may seem even to you in saying so, I feel in my own line that I could command as large an applause—of course taking into account my brief-lived advantage of youth. Her acting, apart from her voice, does not please me. It seems to me to want intelligence of the subtler feelings, the under-current of emotion, which constitutes the chief beauty of the situation and the character. Am I jealous when I say this? Read on and judge.

On our return that night, when I had seen the Venosta to bed, I went into my own room, opened the window, and looked out. A lovely night, mild as in spring at Florence—the moon at her full, and the stars looking so calm and so high beyond our reach of their

tranquillity. The evergreens in the gardens of the villas around me silvered over, and the summer boughs, not yet clothed with leaves, were scarcely visible amid the changeless smile of the laurels. At the distance lay Paris, only to be known by its innumerable lights. And then I said to myself—

“No, I cannot be an actress; I cannot resign my real self for that vamped-up hypocrite before the lamps. Out on those stage robes and painted cheeks! Out on that simulated utterance of sentiments learned by rote and practised before the looking-glass till every gesture has its drill.”

Then I gazed on those stars which provoke our questionings, and return no answer, till my heart grew full, so full, and I bowed my head and wept like a child.

From the Same to the Same.

And still no letter from you! I see in the journals that you have left Nice. Is it that you are too absorbed in your work to have leisure to write to me? I know you are not ill; for if you were, all Paris would know of it. All Europe has an interest in your health. Positively I will write to you no more till a word from yourself bids me do so.

I fear I must give up my solitary walks in the Bois de Boulogne: they were very dear to me, partly because the quiet path to which I confined myself was that to which you directed me as the one you habitually selected when at Paris, and in which you had brooded over and revolved the loveliest of your romances; and partly because it was there that, catching, alas! not inspiration but enthusiasm from the genius that had hallowed the place, and dreaming I might originate

music, I nursed my own aspirations and murmured my own airs. And though so close to that world of Paris to which all artists must appeal for judgment or audience, the spot was so undisturbed, so sequestered. But of late that path has lost its solitude, and therefore its charm.

Six days ago the first person I encountered in my walk was a man whom I did not then heed. He seemed in thought, or rather in reverie, like myself; we passed each other twice or thrice, and I did not notice whether he was young or old, tall or short; but he came the next day, and a third day, and then I saw that he was young, and, in so regarding him, his eyes became fixed on mine. The fourth day he did not come, but two other men came, and the look of one was inquisitive and offensive. They sat themselves down on a bench in the walk, and though I did not seem to notice them, I hastened home; and the next day in talking with our kind Madame Savarin, and alluding to these quiet walks of mine, she hinted, with the delicacy which is her characteristic, that the customs of Paris did not allow Demoiselles *comme il faut* to walk alone even in the most sequestered paths of the Bois.

I begin now to comprehend your disdain of customs which impose chains so idly galling on the liberty of our sex.

We dined with the Savarins last evening: what a joyous nature he has! Not reading Latin, I only know Horace by translations, which I am told are bad; but Savarin seems to me a sort of half Horace. Horace on his town-bred side, so playfully well-bred, so good-humoured in his philosophy, so affectionate to friends, and so biting to foes. But certainly Savarin could not

have lived in a country farm upon endives and mallows. He is town-bred and Parisian, *jusqu'au bout des ongles*. How he admires you, and how I love him for it! Only in one thing he disappoints me there. It is your style that he chiefly praises: certainly that style is matchless; but style is only the clothing of thought, and to praise your style seems to me almost as invidious as the compliment to some perfect beauty, not on her form and face, but on her taste in dress.

We met at dinner an American and his wife—a Colonel and Mrs. Morley: she is delicately handsome, as the American women I have seen generally are, and with that frank vivacity of manner which distinguishes them from English women. She seemed to take a fancy to me, and we soon grew very good friends.

She is the first advocate I have met, except yourself, of that doctrine upon the Rights of Women—of which one reads more in the journals than one hears discussed in *salons*.

Naturally enough I felt great interest in that subject, more especially since my rambles in the Bois were forbidden; and as long as she declaimed on the hard fate of the women who, feeling within them powers that struggle for air and light beyond the close precinct of household duties, find themselves restricted from fair rivalry with men in such fields of knowledge and toil and glory, as men since the world began have appropriated to themselves, I need not say that I went with her cordially: you can guess that by my former letters. But when she entered into the detailed catalogue of our exact wrongs and our exact rights, I felt all the pusillanimity of my sex, and shrank back in terror.

Her husband, joining us when she was in full tide of eloquence, smiled at me with a kind of saturnine mirth. "Mademoiselle, don't believe a word she says; it is only tall talk! In America the women are absolute tyrants, and it is I who, in concert with my oppressed countrymen, am going in for a platform agitation to restore the Rights of Men."

Upon this there was a lively battle of words between the spouses, in which, I must own, I thought the lady was decidedly worsted.

No, Eulalie, I see nothing in these schemes for altering our relations towards the other sex which would improve our condition. The inequalities we suffer are not imposed by law—not even by convention; they are imposed by nature.

Eulalie, you have had an experience unknown to me; you have loved. In that day did you—you, round whom poets and sages and statesmen gather, listening to your words as to an oracle—did you feel that your pride of genius had gone out from you—that your ambition lived in him whom you loved—that his smile was more to you than the applause of a world?

I feel as if love in a woman must destroy her rights of equality—that it gives to her a sovereign even in one who would be inferior to herself if her love did not glorify and crown him. Ah! if I could but merge this terrible egotism which oppresses me, into the being of some one who is what I would wish to be were I man! I would not ask him to achieve fame. Enough if I felt that he was worthy of it, and happier methinks to console him when he failed than to triumph with him when he won. Tell me, have you felt this? When you loved did you stoop as to a slave, or did you bow down as to a master?

From Madame de Grantmesnil to Isaura Cicogna.

Chère enfant,—All your four letters have reached me the same day. In one of my sudden whims I set off with a few friends on a rapid tour along the Riviera to Genoa, thence to Turin on to Milan. Not knowing where we should rest even for a day, my letters were not forwarded.

I came back to Nice yesterday, consoled for all fatigues in having insured that accuracy in description of localities which my work necessitates.

You are, my poor child, in that revolutionary crisis through which genius passes in youth before it knows its own self, and longs vaguely to do or to be a something other than it has done or has been before. For, not to be unjust to your own powers, genius you have—that in-born undefinable essence, including talent, and yet distinct from it. Genius you have, but genius unconcentrated, undisciplined. I see, though you are too diffident to say so openly, that you shrink from the fame of singer, because, fevered by your reading, you would fain aspire to the thorny crown of author. I echo the hard saying of the *Maestro*, I should be your worst enemy did I encourage you to forsake a career in which a dazzling success is so assured, for one in which, if it were your true vocation, you would not ask whether you were fit for it; you would be impelled to it by the terrible star which presides over the birth of poets.

Have you, who are so naturally observant, and of late have become so reflective, never remarked that authors, however absorbed in their own craft, do not wish their children to adopt it? The most successful author is perhaps the last person

to whom neophytes should come for encouragement. This I think is not the case with the cultivators of the sister arts. The painter, the sculptor, the musician, seem disposed to invite disciples and welcome acolytes. As for those engaged in the practical affairs of life, fathers mostly wish their sons to be as they have been.

The politician, the lawyer, the merchant, each says to his children, "Follow my steps." All parents in practical life would at least agree in this—they would not wish their sons to be poets. There must be some sound cause in the world's philosophy for this general concurrence of digression from a road of which the travellers themselves say to those whom they love best, "Beware!"

Romance in youth is, if rightly understood, the happiest nutriment of wisdom in after-years; but I would never invite any one to look upon the romance of youth as a thing

"To case in periods and embalm in ink."

Enfant, have you need of a publisher to create romance? Is it not in yourself? Do not imagine that genius requires for its enjoyment the scratch of the pen and the types of the printer. Do not suppose that the poet, the *romancier*, is most poetic, most romantic, when he is striving, struggling, labouring, to check the rush of his ideas, and materialise the images which visit him as souls into such tangible likenesses of flesh and blood that the highest compliment a reader can bestow on them is to say that they are lifelike? No: the poet's real delight is not in the mechanism of composing; the best part of that delight is in the sympathies he has established with innumerable modifications of life and form, and art and nature—sym-

pathies which are often found equally keen in those who have not the same gift of language. The poet is but the interpreter. What of?—Truths in the hearts of others. He utters what they feel. Is the joy in the utterance? Nay, it is in the feeling itself. So, my dear, dark-bright child of song, when I bade thee open, out of the beaten thoroughfare, paths into the meads and river-banks at either side of the formal hedgerows, rightly dost thou add that I enjoined thee to make thine art thy companion. In the culture of that art for which you are so eminently gifted, you will find the ideal life ever beside the real. Are you not ashamed to tell me that in that art you do but utter the thoughts of others? You utter them in music; through the music you not only give to the thoughts a new character, but you make them reproductive of fresh thoughts in your audience.

You said very truly that you found in composing you could put into music thoughts which you could not put into words. That is the peculiar distinction of music. No genuine musician can explain in words exactly what he means to convey in his music.

How little a *libretto* interprets an opera—how little we care even to read it! It is the music that speaks to us; and how?—Through the human voice. We do not notice how poor are the words which the voice warbles. It is the voice itself interpreting the soul of the musician which enchants and enthralls us. And you who have that voice pretend to despise the gift. What! despise the power of communicating delight!—the power that we authors envy; and rarely, if ever, can we give delight with so little alloy as the singer.

And when an audience disperses,

can you guess what griefs the singer may have comforted? what hard hearts he may have softened? what high thoughts he may have awakened?

You say, "Out on the vamped-up hypocrite! Out on the stage-ropes and painted cheeks!"

I say, "Out on the morbid spirit which so cynically regards the mere details by which a whole effect on the minds and hearts and souls of races and nations can be produced!"

There, have I scolded you sufficiently? I should scold you more, if I did not see in the affluence of your youth and your intellect the cause of your restlessness.

Riches are always restless. It is only to poverty that the gods give content.

You question me about love: you ask if I have ever bowed to a master, ever merged my life in another's: expect no answer on this from me. Circe herself could give no answer to the simplest maid, who, never having loved, asks, "What is love?"

In the history of the passions each human heart is a world in itself; its experience profits no others. In no two lives does love play the same part or bequeath the same record.

I know not whether I am glad or sorry that the word "love" now falls on my ear with a sound as slight and as faint as the dropping of a leaf in autumn may fall on thine.

I volunteer but this lesson, the wisest I can give, if thou canst understand it: as I bade thee take art into thy life, so learn to look on life itself as an art. Thou couldst discover the charm in Tasso; thou couldst perceive that the requisite of all art, that which pleases, is in the harmony of proportion. We lose sight of beauty if we exaggerate the feature most beautiful.

Love proportioned, adorns the homeliest existence; love disproportioned, deforms the fairest.

Alas! wilt thou remember this warning when the time comes in which it may be needed?

. E—— G——.

WILLIAM SMITH.

THERE is nothing more usual than to say that the world knows nothing of its greatest men. One thing is certain, however, that of those who affect it, if not with the greatest, yet with the most subtle and penetrating influence, it often knows nothing. Men who breathe into others what is in reality the breath of life to them, who communicate to thousands the opinions and sentiments which are their best part, remain often totally unknown in person and even in name to those whom they have inspired, and whose intellectual life may be said to have proceeded from them. This, no doubt, is largely caused by that general prevalence of anonymous writing which confounds in one big voice of the Magazine or the Review the utterances of many individual voices. We believe that the preservation of this anonymity is of great service to all serial, and especially to all critical, composition—giving freedom to the writer, and taking away one almost irresistible temptation towards undue warmth either of praise or censure; but at the same time it separates the writer from the reader, and deprives many a literary man who—though perhaps not great enough to shine in the highest rank of genius—is an able and judicious guide of public opinion, from that personal appreciation which is one of the most agreeable recompenses the world can give. The respectable and honoured name which stands at the head of this page is one of the best examples we can give of the separation of which we speak. So many times has he led the readers of this Magazine into the deeper fields of thought—so often directed their attention to the true and the false in philosophical specu-

lation, to the lovely and unlovely in contemporary literature, within these pages—that it is impossible for us to allow the grave to close over him without doing our best to render to his name the honour which has been already rendered to his works by many a discriminating reader. No better type could be found of the true man of letters, the student, scholar, and critic of our days, who is already beginning to yield to a hastier and more shallow class of contemporary commentators. He was not of those who dash off a breathless criticism on the spur of the moment, or arrogantly pretend to judge of subjects upon which they have the merest smattering of knowledge. He belonged to the older fashion of man who had the habit of mastering a subject before speaking of it, and of bringing a richly-cultivated understanding, a mind and memory full of all that is excellent in the past, to the consideration of the affairs and productions of the present. That charm of cultivation which, next to genius, is almost the most delightful of mental conditions, was his in an eminent degree. It is a quality which becomes day by day less common in literature, as in other arts. A man without worldly ambition, without any sharp prick of necessity to drive him on, with leisure, learning, a thoughtful mind, and an undisturbed life, is in absolutely ideal circumstances for the pursuit of literature; and such were the conditions under which, for at least the later part of his life, Mr. Smith pursued it. Very different are the circumstances which often surround the writer, toiling perhaps into fame or for fortune, going against the tide, and buffeted by busy men and ill

winds, straining every faculty to keep every step he gains. It was the theory of the author of 'Gravenhurst,' that conflict and struggle were good at once for the mind and the energies of man; but in his own full manhood he was beyond the reach of conflict, and pursued his favourite studies, his reflections and speculations, in a gentle quiet and peacefulness most congenial to his work. It might be perhaps the absence of the conflict, the want of any motive strong enough to balance his natural love of the country, of quiet, leisure, and seclusion, that makes his mere name now an insufficient description to the world of all he was. In his youth, the circle of young men who surrounded him expected for him the highest fame; he was to be their leader, the foremost in all intellectual progress, always the superior, in those visions of the future, which are often so widely apart from reality. But if others passed him in the race, pressed on higher, and won more dazzling prizes, it was because the finer qualities of his mind outweighed the coarser, and fastidious taste and a retiring disposition withdrew him from the common arena, where, amid shouts and cheers and commonplace din, the ordinary competitors for fame take their places, disregarding all its vulgarer circumstances. He could not disregard them. His nature was so constituted that he shrank from the noises, whether applause or otherwise; but from his retirement, wherever that was, many a beautiful thought, many a discriminating criticism, and much clear and lucid philosophical argument, came forth from time to time. He discoursed to his unknown friends, himself unknown. He helped to form many a mind which knew nothing of him, and tempered with his ways of thinking the unformed thoughts of many a candid mind. How much

he influenced opinion in this nameless way it would be hard to estimate. An anonymous writer seldom knows the extent to which his work has told upon the world; but if, as Mr. Puff says in the 'Critic,' "the number of people who undergo the fatigue of judging for themselves is small," it may safely be said that every critical writer of power and candour makes up a great many men's minds for them, and does much to direct that ground-swell of general opinion which rises imperceptible, and in which each man sees his own decision reflected, however little capable he may have been of making a decision for himself.

The works by which Mr. Smith will be chiefly known, are the two volumes entitled 'Thorndale' and 'Gravenhurst.' They are both of the class which we call "beautiful books," without pausing to inquire too closely whether another adjective might not be more appropriate. In both books, with different kinds of conditions, his own mind is the chief thing revealed to us; a mind so gentle, pure, and good, as indeed to lose some part of its power over others by the unlikeness of its refined nature to the much less delicate souls of common men. It is as a philosopher that Mr. Smith presents himself to us; and though there is little glitter or external attraction about these volumes, they are so truly thoughtful (word much abused, yet the most suitable to describe such a man), so full of reflective and observant power, that they are favourite volumes with many a reader whose bias is not metaphysical. 'Thorndale,' the more important of the two, is cast in a somewhat antiquated form. It is supposed to be the journals and jottings of a philosophic invalid, found after his death in an Italian villa; 'The

Conflict of Opinions' is the second title of this book, and clearly represents its character. To do so still more clearly in a few words, we may quote a very characteristic anecdote told of its first appearance. He had informed some friends deprecatingly that the religious opinions of the book might be considered heterodox, and had awakened within them some anxiety as to the views expressed. The friends in question were not of a theological bias, nor given to devout reading. But when the book was read,—“By Jove!” said one of them, half amused, half impressed, “I have not read so religious a book for years.” This could not be a better criticism of one aspect of the work. It ventures upon discussion of the highest subjects, and does not hesitate to indulge in very free speculation. It professes but a vague faith, the particulars of which it would be hard to embody in any creed—yet a work more deeply penetrated with the true spirit of religion it would be difficult to find. It is perhaps the very best, most lovable exposition ever given of that pious uncertainty which has of late characterised so many fine minds. Anything more unlike the Voltaire-phase of light-hearted infidelity it would be difficult to conceive. Infidelity there is none in it, but, on the contrary, a tremulous faithfulness to all the whisperings of what we call natural religion—a longing very earnest, but without excitement, for more knowledge, more light, a better understanding of divine things.

The hero of this book, if such an expression is permissible, is a young Englishman, who has retired, after many wanderings, to a lonely villa on the height of Mount Posilipo, loveliest of all mounts of vision, to fade away gradually from all earthly sights and sounds, with that most beautiful landscape on

earth continually, so long as they were able to see it, before his eyes. We do not know whether, in this dim and melancholy creation, Mr. Smith had any thought of another figure, a real man, more passionate and tragical than his pensive hero, the Italian poet Leopardi, who chose a similar mode of dying. But it is difficult to avoid thinking of the latter in his lonely little house on the other side of the bay, when the gentle invalid of the Villa Scarpa, with his unimpassioned musings, is brought so plainly before us. Leopardi died in the fierce despair of that bitter and painful kind of unbelief which casts everything heavenly and eternal out of the question, and forces logic and thought into a wild negation of all but that material existence, proved to him by perpetual suffering, which limits his dark horizon, and quenches his every hope. Thorndale is a man of a different mould. No despair, scarcely even any anxiety about the mystery of the hereafter, is in his mind. He looks forward to it with a serious curiosity, fearing nothing, hoping not too much, unappalled by the thought of ceasing to exist altogether, yet feeling the instinct of immortality more reasonable and more satisfactory than that of Nothingness. It is a state of mind as different from that of those who see golden gates on one hand, and the flames of hell on the other, as it is from the angry despair of that imaginative Infidel who cannot forgive the cold and cruel Reason which has beguiled him, for depriving him of heaven and hell. Leopardi would have been a happier man could he have held the same intense and circumstantial faith as Dante did, in the days when Purgatory and the infernal regions were but next door as it were, and visible to keen eyes at all times. But the dying Englishman of the nineteenth century could

no more have believed in these infernal torments, than he could have consigned his acquaintances to them with that austere splendour of impartiality which plunged the noble Farinata into the depths of hell.

This melancholy but, quite composed and unexcited doubtfulness of everything, however, has somewhat palled upon us at the present day, by dint of many inferior imitations which have vulgarised this type of mind by endeavouring too much to make it represent a certain arrogant intellectual superiority, the disposition of the Illuminati, who are too much above common people to be moved by any common faith. No such pretension appears in 'Thorn-dale,' where the anxious unbeliever who finds refuge in a community of Cistercians, and the Christian Utopian who hopes for a purified and ennobled world, are represented with equal care and justice. In the following sentences Mr. Smith expresses more succinctly and clearly the very contrast we have endeavoured to point out, between the eagerness of the man whose spiritual anxiety forced him into one creed or other, and the composure of the philosopher who regarded all spiritual questions calmly, without any personal excitement either of fear or hope:—

"The two men were not very congenial. In one respect there could not be a stronger contrast. Poor Cyril was tormented all his life by the anxious question, What he was to believe? On right belief must depend his future safety. The poet, when he could not see the truth, left the truth with God—left it with confidence there. Cyril had the terrible responsibility thrown on him, at his own peril, to see the truth himself. You would say that the one felt this responsibility too much, the other too little. Luxmore was interested with Cyril at first, but soon wearied of him; and Cyril, for his part, could not understand, and was not a little scandalised at, the perfect

tranquillity with which the poet would admit on some most momentous subjects his profound ignorance."

A few other sketches of character, or at least of types of philosophical intellect—perhaps a truer description—are scattered through the book, embodying the various schools of speculation. There is the Utopian Clarence, a visionary, whose belief in the growing happiness, purification, and betterment in every way of the human race, is with great insight conjoined to the gentle craft of landscape-painting, which, by occupying the mind just enough to keep it wholesome and natural, while leaving still much leisure and much silence for the exercises of meditation, is, we should say, the very best occupation ever devised for a Christian visionary. In opposition to him is the hard and powerful unbeliever Seckendorf, who has faith in nothing, and not much desire for faith or spiritual curiosity of any kind, but who feels a satisfaction in the actual state of affairs in the world as it exists, which is demanded by his cheerful animal spirits and sound physical being. This latter personage is a German baron, made by stress of circumstances into an English doctor—and much the most decided and realistic individual of the group. His arguments, though we have no right to conclude that the author agreed with them, are the most forcible, as they are the most trenchant and decisive. He is the modified Voltairean of the nineteenth century—no mocker, but regarding Christian institutions and faith with a benign criticism—(which, by the by, is often more offensive than mockery)—as things very useful and even beautiful in themselves,—a class of mental phenomena strangely interesting to the philosopher, though in no way received by him, or even worthy of being considered as possessing any

claim upon his belief. Between these three contending thinkers—the monk, the Utopian philosopher, and the distinctly acknowledged yet perfectly liberal and benign unbeliever—the central figure stands, reporting all they say, but leaving the subject without any decision, with no answering argument of his own, or casting-vote to give the victory to one side or another. There is nothing more remarkable in the book than this absolute impartiality. Most writers, in conducting such an imaginary discussion, would lean to one side or the other, and unconsciously would put into the mouths of those speakers whom their own convictions opposed, a feebleness of argument, a less skilful method. We do not, indeed, know any other author who is quite clear of the weakness of creating men of straw for the pleasure of knocking them down. Mr. Smith's mind was of too lofty a tone to adopt this expedient, and his own mental position was not one of sufficient certainty to make it tempting to him. He was himself one of those eager speculators, those questioners after truth. It is himself who speaks, now in one aspect of his character, now in another. His bolder doubts find expression in Seckendorf, his aspirations after the best in Clarence, his appreciation of the beauty of real religion in Cyril. With all he agrees, yet entirely he agrees with none. The book comes to no conclusion, answers no questions. It is a conflict of opinion from beginning to end, a struggle of two or three human intellects with each other—yet scarcely with each other, all having certain points of agreement; rather with the great mysteries around them, which all their strength is applied, and vainly applied, to fathom.

The chief point of agreement,

however, between these contending thinkers, is a certain religiousness of mind—we know no other word to use—which pervades all. Even Seckendorf, though he is least under the sway of religious feeling, is not exempt from it. They are all good men, desirous of learning all that is to be learned, of making every advance possible in the way of truth. And the book, as we have already said, though full of many things which would grieve the simply orthodox, is in reality a pious book, full of strange and beautiful reverence for the All-Creator, and pervaded with the purest sentiments of duty, resignation, and tenderness. We cannot think that even the soul most persuadable, most ready to accept the opinion of others as its own, will be harmed by such a conflict of opinions. For the writer is not sufficiently convinced himself to make any polemical effort. His own mental condition is that of a wistful, perpetual argument. Some certain firm ground there is upon which he plants a foot, but that one foothold of truth is very vague to the bystander. Now it seems one thing, now another. But while in conviction he is thus uncertain, in heart he is always true—serving God in his doubt more than many another in certainty, sure of nothing except of some Divine thing to which man is responsible, and—still more—of some unspeakable, indescribable union between himself, the scarce-believer, and this Divine, whatever it may be. If there are minds which are shocked by the possibility of such a far-reaching communion of the saints, existing, one does not know how, in the heart of this man, who received no such doctrine, who said no creed and perhaps in his innermost thoughts had never even formed one in which to express his faith, we attempt no explanation of what we mean; we only refer them to the

book which we have been thus discussing. 'Thorndale,' too, will shock them; but if they are candid and susceptible of feeling, it will touch their hearts at the same time with the strangest affecting paradox—the spectacle of a mind all astray, and wandering among indefinite shadows and worlds not realised; and of a heart at anchor, moored to something ineffable, something supreme. The revelation thus made is as touching as anything in literature.

Such wonderful mental impartiality, however, such power of seeing all the sides of a question, seem somehow incompatible with real power to attract or fix the attention of the world. The nature thus characterised misses that imperious and royal force which makes men recognise their natural leader. But yet something like genius is in the revelation of such a mind—something which touches profoundly all who are capable of appreciating it—and with all the greater force that it is too subtle, too delicate, too much expressed by suggestion, too little by matter-of-fact information, to have any but the slightest access to the intelligence of the crowd.

Mr. Smith's other work, 'Gravenhurst,' though not less remarkable in its refined grace of diction, or in its impartial setting forth of argument, is less beautiful and less striking than 'Thorndale.' It has a distinct object, which at the very outset is a defect, considering the nature of its author; and this object, too, considering its own character, is a further defect. It is a somewhat elaborate attempt to prove that evil is a necessity in the world—that without it there would be less enjoyment, less energy, less beauty—that it is the shadow necessary to every picture, and at the same time the stimulant to every exertion. The old, old

question of the origin of evil is taken up again, and regarded in a new way, from a novel point of view, and with novel results. The author goes the length, we think, of endeavouring to prove that without evil there could be no good; and that whether the evil is spiritual or physical, it has an appointed and necessary place in the economy of the world, which without it could not be. Part of the argument has been taken up by a genius more potent and sovereign than Mr. Smith's, in the singular poem of "Jubal," in which George Eliot has demonstrated, or attempted to demonstrate, the wonderful uses of the fact of Death; the quickening of feeling, the growth of mental energy which proceeded from its first realisation. No such argument can be without a certain fantastical element, to say the least—an overstrain of the reasoning faculties to prove by sheer intellectual force a principle which is held at arm's length by universal nature. To call evil good is one of the last exercises of an intellectualism beyond bounds, and one of the least successful. But though we have little sympathy with Mr. Smith's later volume, yet we cannot say that it is inferior to the preceding one in anything but its plan and purpose, which condemn it before it came into being. The mere writing of both these volumes is nearly perfect; and there are bits of narrative and description which have a purity and beauty quite individual. The very landscape has a moral significance. What the writer sees from any cottage window is not mere grass and trees, but innumerable episodes of rural life, all relieved against the trees and the grass, all overflowing with tender human feeling, and the profoundest susceptibility to all gentle sympathies. Were this a review of Mr. Smith's works, we should be tempt-

ed here to pause and present the reader with some of these fresh and tender sketches. The beginning of 'Thorndale' is full of them, and they are almost all beautiful. To this book, indeed, we return as the real monument of a most gentle genius, too thinly clothed with earthly garments to stand against the storms of this world, or make a commanding place in it. The author himself recommends the book to "him who is apt to pause with the forefinger in the half-closed volume." Such a reader will ever appreciate such a writer; and all who read this work with sympathy will know the man who produced it better than by any further description we can give.

The life of a man of this mental mould is seldom remarkable; and there was in Mr. Smith the same shadow of shrinking timidity, and shyness carried to a painful length, which incapacitated the poet Cowper for the exertions of life. The resemblance occurs to our mind, without, however, going further than this primary accident, for nothing could be more sound or sane than Mr. Smith's fine intelligence at all periods of his life. He was brought up for the Bar, but his constitutional shyness prevented him from ever facing the world in any public capacity. And he had no spur of necessity to drive him into work. He disliked all society in the conventional sense of the word, though no one could be more profoundly social, more genial or kind. His contributions to this Magazine began so far back as 1839, and since then have continued regularly at intervals—a connection always pleasant on both sides, and accompanied by that most warm and true friendship between writer and editor, which all the literary staff of *Maga* will agree in considering one of the special privileges of her

contributors. So lately as July 1871 his last contribution appeared in these pages; so that his connection with the Magazine lasted for a period of thirty years. For a long time he had been the philosophical critic *par excellence*, and many of our readers will recollect the admirable reviews of works of this description, in which the grace and refinement of his style was scarcely less remarkable than the singular and almost excessive impartiality and power of appreciation which always distinguished him. He was ever more ready to agree than disapprove, finding in almost everything some side upon which he could sympathise with the writer, and condemning only when driven to it by some sharp necessity which even his gentle soul could not ignore. To say of these articles all that we should wish to say, would be something like applauding ourselves, for do they not form part of *Maga*? but it would be unjust to his name not to indicate, at least, the long course of useful work, not less valuable or influential that it was anonymous, in which he was engaged for so many years.

The three tragedies which we find in a small volume bearing his name, probably—though here we speak without book—belonged to an earlier period of his career. We do not think that any very high place can be claimed for them among dramatic productions; but the fact that Macready, on reading 'Athelwold' (which had been sent to him, without name or recommendation, when published), saw so much excellence in it that he immediately communicated with the author through the publishers, and produced the play at Drury Lane, speaks a great deal in its favour. It is, however, forgotten now, as seems the fate of plays, except when they are produced by the highest genius. Some of the occasional

verses which we find scattered through 'Thorndale' are very sweet—refined and melodious as everything which came from his lips; but they are not sufficiently remarkable to claim any special notice. His nature was poetic, and so was his prose, which contains many passages worthy of being quoted as specimens of the very best English of our day; but the medium of verse was not that which was most natural or congenial to him.

It is always a delicate matter to lift even a corner of the veil which shrouds the private life of such a man; yet in this case there is some reason for drawing it so far aside as may be done without indiscretion. He whom the shrinking delicacy of his mental constitution had withdrawn from active life in his youth, and who had chosen seclusion and the pensive pleasures of a contemplative existence as the best which the world had in store for him—had such a sudden illumination of love and congenial fellowship poured upon the later chapters of his life, as does not fall to the lot of many men, even at the most ardent period of their existence. He married twelve years ago a lady qualified in every way to brighten and complete the life which had been so long companionless, and whose deep and passionate attachment threw a gleam of that romance which is dear to humanity upon the pale and sober records of middle age. These last twelve years were an idyl of love and happiness. The pair thus completely united lived like the lovers of a pastoral, without the cares of ordinary conventional life, spending their pleasant days, as the fancy took them, in one beautiful region or another, living for each other, for the congenial and pleasant work which was never pursued with too much absorption or hurry, for study

and thought, and the society of those dear to them. From the very touching narrative of Mr. Smith's later days, which his wife has written with her tears for the friends who loved him, we may quote a few particulars of this rare existence:—

"We spent nine, ten, eleven months, as the case might be, in some exquisite country or other, and the rest of the year at Brighton or Edinburgh. And there was a freedom from all home cares—an utter absence of discussion as to servants, ways and means, household anxieties of every kind, which suited his temperament best. I had no small worries to consult him about, as I infallibly should have done, for not my most transient thought was ever kept back from him. . . . We had been twice in Switzerland together, had spent six summers in the Lake country, and two by the sea at Barmouth and Bude. The love of nature which is so marked a feature in 'Thorndale,' 'Gravenhurst'—nay, in every one of their writer's contributions to serial literature—was, as might be expected, a perfect passion in the man. It was enough to make him overflow with joyousness—the joyousness of a bird—that a sudden sunbeam should light up a favourite birch-tree in the perfection of its spring or autumn beauty, that he would watch day by day. This intense love of the beautiful never diminished, but it seemed, as years went on, to find a more and more easy satisfaction. He no longer panted for the snowy Alps that had brought him such high rapture; nay, he believed he could in future surrender his much-loved Cumberland mountains for more commonplace scenery. Wherever a tree rose up against the sky, with the sun shining through its leaves, there he would stand spell-bound. Trees were his darlings to the last. . . .

"One of his characteristics was a quite unusual equability of mood and uniformity of habit. He was never disinclined to rise at the usual hour, nor reluctant to enter upon the morning's work, whether it were the reading or writing, the *thinking* with book or with pen in hand—for in either case the pursuit was still 'thinking.' His mind was not very susceptible of passive

enjoyment: he would seldom, for instance, let the figures of a novel flit across it, leaving little trace behind. To him books were work rather than relaxation; unless they brought material for fresh action to his own intellect, they were of little value. But that intellect was always ready to grapple with such works as did this. Never had he a headache or a *désœuvré* mood: never was he listless or apathetic. Never was the eye, or the mind, or the temper clouded. There was always the same sweet playfulness and vivid perception of the small things which make up so much of our daily life. He was invariably alive to them all. From the abstract character of his habitual thinking, it might have been supposed that he would be occasionally absent-minded. I never knew an instance of this tendency in him. He was as ready to talk to his constant companion, to enter into and to share all the blissful nonsense that characterises the happy, as though there did not await him on the little desk some unfinished paper on a metaphysical problem, or some work tasking all his well-known power of concentrated attention. . . . I do not say there were no hours of depression. When the winter or summer move was impending—and our circumstances, our wandering life, necessitated these moves—he was for the time depressed. He used to compare himself to a vase of water which looked clear while at rest, but got turbid when shaken. But, oh, it soon cleared again! The expectation of guests, too, would sometimes a little perturb the student, who loved his rule of life; but no guest of his will easily forget the gracious cordiality of his welcome, or his sweet faculty of making every one, whether of related intelligence to his or not, feel instantly and absolutely at home. Neither did we ever receive any guests who were not friends; and, moreover, there was that in our simple way of life, simple habits of all kinds, that sifted even these. Certainly it was only the unworldly and intelligent that cared to come to us, or ever did come. We had no mere acquaintance, no surface intercourse with the ‘neighbourhood’ in which we chanced to be

placed—and this, to his nature, was a precious immunity.”

Mrs. Smith quotes here some tender and charming verses, which breathe the very spirit—somewhat self-absorbed in that delightful egotism *à deux*, which is not selfishness—of this secluded and happy existence:—

“Oh, vex me not with needless cry
Of what the world may think or claim;
Let the sweet life pass sweetly by.
The same, the same, and every day the same.

Thee, Nature, Thought—that burns in me
A living and consuming flame—
These must suffice: let the life be
The same, the same, and evermore the same.

Here find I taskwork, here society;
Thou art my gold, thou art my fame:
Let the sweet life pass sweetly by.
The same, the same, and every day the same.”

Who would not be thankful that the lonely man had this “sweet life” at the end of his pensive existence? who will not feel a pang to see it stealing out of his hold? Its tender monotony, yet perpetual freshness, were balm and medicine for all the wounds of life and thought. But the time came for it to pass away like all lovely things. In the early summer of last year his wife heard him say, as they stood watching the sunset, “The summers will be few.” And, indeed, that May was his last. He fell ill of a mysterious malady—fever-fits, unaccompanied by any other symptom of illness—which gradually wore his strength away. The interval of hopes and fears which is, alas! so usual, followed; and at the end of the year he said, half playfully, half-sadly, to his wife—“Oh, Lucy, we will go off together to the country, have done with medicines and doctors, and there we will calmly and quietly wait the in-

evitable end, and we will love each other to the last!" The illness, however, pursued its way, spite of all struggles of science, spite of all the more terrible struggles of love. With all his friends breaking their hearts round him, he was the only one whose cheerfulness was never forced. "The bright, sweet smile, that only got brighter and sweeter to the last, the animated manner, and, above all, the interest he took in everything and everybody but his own self and his own state, prevented his friends from realising that he was dangerously ill." He ceased to be able to sleep. "But those anxious nights were not all unhappy; he used to be not merely cheerful but playful during those sleepless hours. Nothing provoked a gesture or tone of impatience, much less a complaint; it was always the alleviations on which he dwelt." One night, while the anxious wife kept silent, hoping he was asleep, he suddenly said, "Your love supports me;" and something in the almost solemn tone of his voice struck her with terror. This was the beginning of the very last chapter of all. The mysterious fever came upon him day by day, like some spectral foe, parching up the very blood in his veins, clasping him closer and closer in its fatal embrace. He would seem to have had neither regret nor doubt in those last suffering but tranquil

days. He pitied "infinitely" the heart-broken wife whom he was about to leave behind him; but for himself went smiling into the darkness, for which his searching intellect had striven in vain to find a clue of guidance, but which the heart that loved God even in its intellectual ignorance of Him, never feared. No saint ever died a more blessed death; no saint ever lived a more blameless, beneficent, reverent life: God knows the rest; and he is a narrow believer indeed who cannot trust in the arms of the heavenly father this gentle soul.

We find the following verses within the cover of his devoted wife's memorial of him. Where they were written, and how, we are not told; but we quote them for the sake of any reader whose mind may be haunted by the pensive gloom of 'Thorndale.'

"The crown, the palm of saints in
Paradise,
My wearied spirit does not crave to
win.
Breathe—in Thy cup, O Christ, of agonies—
Breathe Thy deep love, and let me
drink therein.

To weep as Thou hast wept, I ask no
more—
Be mine the sorrows that were known
to Thee;
To the bright heavens I have no strength
to soar,
But I would find Thee on Thy Cal-
vary."

A TRUE REFORMER.—PART VIII.

CHAPTER XXXI.—A FIRST EFFORT WITH A NEW BROOM.

THE time seemed now to have come for a first attempt to enter upon the task which I had been bold enough to propose to myself. By dint of careful attention and application I had pretty well mastered the secrets of departmental routine, without which it would be hopeless to attempt the initiation of changes. A man may administer an office well by sheer force of ability, without diving deep into things; but to carry out changes of system, a knowledge of details is absolutely essential. All successful administrators, Pitt, Peel, Napoleon, Wellington—not to mention our own Mr. Merrifield—have been conspicuous for their mastery of details. In every great department the obstruction to reform does not come from any factious opposition; it arises partly from the vanity which resists any change which strikes at men's self-importance, but still more, because men who spend their lives in the performance of routine business become unable at last to see beyond it; they get to regard it as the end instead of the means. This was emphatically what had happened in our Pall Mall establishment, where many of our most respected members had really got to look upon the army as a mere appendage to the office, kept up in order to furnish it with occupation. But these men of routine are great in details, and to overcome their powers of passive obstruction you must be able to beat them at their own weapons. This then had been my first aim; and while my branch had come to regard me as a harmless creature, though, perhaps a trifle inquisitive, I was gradually acquiring a know-

ledge of the mysteries of routine in all its branches. And the best proof of the success of my labours was, that I could now predict with almost certainty, what would be the fate of any paper that came into the office; what, for example, would be the nature of the objections raised upon a contingent bill; in what cases the office would discover that some new additional certificate was necessary which had never before been prescribed in any known regulation; under what circumstances a general could issue an extra ration without first telegraphing up to us for sanction; what would be the conditions that might justify a distant commanding engineer in driving in a nail on his own authority, and what those that would involve the deputation of a young officer from our establishment to tell him how to do it; how many different forms a battery officer making a requisition for repairs to his carriages would have to send in before he hit upon the right one; how many paragraphs Burley would put into a report—upon these, and a variety of similar interesting problems, I used to exercise my ingenuity, and it was gratifying to observe how accurate my diagnosis had become. It was quite a new sort of inductive philosophy.

But further, as administrative arrangements are greatly mixed up with matters of account, it was necessary to get an acquaintance with the mysteries of book-keeping. Not liking to make known my wishes to any one in the office, where the notion of the head of a department—especially a Parliamentary head—wanting to understand details of that sort would

have been regarded as a piece of eccentric curiosity unsupported by any precedent, I got Mr. Patterson's book-keeper to give me private lessons of an evening; and as soon as his knowledge of the subject was exhausted, I engaged the assistant-cashier of my former office, the Metropolitan and Provincial Bank, to teach me banking accounts, finishing up with the instruction of a young man from Counterpain, Batt, Crow, & Co., the well-known public accountants. Many a long evening was spent thus profitably in the back parlor of the house by Queens Gate, while Eva and Sybil were out at parties, and I more than once got whipped by Glissereene (the Government whip) for being absent from divisions; but I was rewarded in the end when, under the light of these studies, the mysteries of military accounts became unfolded. It was not much to make the discovery that I understood them as well as Mr. Aweditte, the Reviewer-General, for I had always held a shrewd suspicion that, like most of the heads of departments, my respected deputy did not know much about these things; but it was something to feel a match for all the ledger-keepers and journal-writers who occupied a rabbit-warren of rooms under my control. Still more gratifying was it to have a clear perception of the beauty of the system; how the whole aim and end of it seemed to be to work up to the Parliamentary grants and obtain vouchers; and how, accordingly, while nobody could spend two-pence-halfpenny in any part of the British empire without proving that he had done so to our satisfaction, by sending up a receipt for the item to our office, the accounts presented to Parliament did not bring out the final cost of any one item of expenditure whatsoever, from a regiment down to a rifle.

Thus fortified, the moment seemed to have come for a first step. The interest of the country in army affairs generally had died away for the time, or possibly the apparent inertness of the new official might have been noticed. As it was, the *Overseer* remarked one Saturday, *apropos* of something military, that the atmosphere of office appeared to have had its usual effect in my case. Since Captain West became Paymaster General to the Forces, it was observed in a smart little paragraph, there had been no more of his lively speculations on military policy. If the Government wanted to gag this promising young member, they had certainly succeeded. It was time then to give up seeming to slumber, and these coming manœuvres appeared to furnish a good lever for the first effort. Accordingly, I determined to seek out Lord Stowe, and unburden myself of my ideas on the subject.

I found the Secretary of State engaged apparently in answering private notes, as was generally the case when I went into his room. I at once plunged into the subject.

"Lord Stowe, I have been thinking a good deal over our present way of carrying on the business of the army, and it seems to me that there is room at least for consideration whether the system may not be improved. I should be glad to be allowed to speak to you on the matter—that is, if I am not interrupting you?"

"Oh, not in the least; I am always ready of course to discuss these things with you," and Lord Stowe, looking rather bored, glanced at the sheet of note-paper before him—at which I too, I grieve to confess, involuntary glancing, could not help recognising the words, "My dear Sophia," and recollecting therefrom that one of his lordship's daughters bore that

name. "Not at all," said my chief, "business is business;" and so saying Lord Stowe gave up his note altogether, and turned round in his chair to listen, his face bearing a beautiful aspect of resignation.

"This War Office is a very big concern."

"It is indeed; I should say it is the heaviest department of the whole; nearly a thousand letters come in every day, I am told. But the Home Office is a heavy Office too; there is not so much work coming in and going out, but some of the cases they get are very big, and then you see the office is much smaller; here the establishment is very large."

"And not only very large, but our business is very complicated. It is not always easy to know how a case should be dealt with when it does come. I know that it took me some weeks of hard work merely to get to the bottom of the routine."

"Well," replied Lord Stowe, smiling as if he were going to say a good thing, "I confess I have not got to the bottom of it yet, but then, you see, I only deal with the part that finds its way up to the top. And I must say the cases are put before me in very good form. I am not quite sure that we might not introduce the Board of Commerce method of docketing. They do things very well at the Board; but after all this is a very big affair, as you truly observe, and it is ticklish work touching any part of a complicated machine."

"It is a complicated machine indeed, and wants a lot of oil constantly poured on it to keep it running smoothly. And it would not take much, I suspect, to throw it out of gear."

"Very true, but then we have a very able staff of officials to keep the thing going, and admirably they do their work. When I was

in the Commons I never lost an opportunity of saying how admirably the public business was carried on by the permanent civil service, and how, in fact, but for them, it could not be carried on for a day."

"I don't want for a moment to be thought to disparage the permanent civil service, but what has impressed me very strongly is the fact that all this press of business and this enormous establishment are kept agoing merely to look after a little bit of an army. If we are to receive and send out a thousand letters a-day with a hundred thousand men, and that in peace time, where would be the limits of our business supposing we had to put half a million into the field? Why, all Pall Mall would not hold us."

"But then that is a case that will never arise. If one principle of English policy is more clear than another, it is that we shall never attempt to compete with Continental powers in respect of their great military establishments. An English army must necessarily be a small one. England, if she engages in military operations on the Continent, must operate with allies. This has always been her policy, and always will be." And, saying this, Lord Stowe leaned back in his chair and crossed his legs as if he thought he rather resembled Mr. Pitt.

"At any rate," I replied, "we act as if these were our principles. If the French or the Austrians, not to say the Germans, were to handle their half-million of soldiers in the way we deal with our little force, their administration would collapse at once. But apart from the question of numbers, I would ask whether, if we barely get along with all this pother in peace-time, with this enormous office and our thousand letters a-day, what would happen to us if we had to go to war? It seems to me that, no matter how small the

army might be, our department would utterly break down."

"Well, but, as to that, I suppose if we had to go to war, matters would be carried on somewhat differently. It is hardly fair to criticise a peace system by assuming a totally different state of things. No doubt in such a case our system of administration would undergo the needful modification to suit the altered conditions."

"And before we had carried out this change, there would be another Crimean break-down. No, not another, it would be something twenty times worse. Then you were merely unprepared, and a system had to be created, but there was at any rate nothing to pull down. But now the first step needed would be to get rid of the monstrous incubus we have been building up all these years. There would be found, I fear, a force of obstructiveness, and interference, and over-centralisation, about this overgrown department, sufficient to drag down the finest army and the best general England ever produced. I declare, my lord, when I think of our hopeless incompetence to undertake a war under our present system; the inevitable disaster that would follow an attempt to do so, with our cumbersome over-centralisation, our multiplication of checks upon checks, and wheels upon wheels, with all the loss of power and the friction they produce; when I think of this, and of the disgrace that must happen, if we are put to the trial, the rage of the nation that would burst forth, and the execration that would be poured on the heads of those who are responsible, I declare my anxiety becomes positive torture sometimes when thinking of these things. It seems as if we were living on the edge of a mine, awaiting an explosion that must come sooner or later."

Lord Stowe seemed rather taken

aback for a moment at this outburst, but quickly recovered himself.

"My dear West," he said, after a short pause, "you draw a very alarming picture, but I don't think things are really so bad as all that, although I daresay there is a great deal of force in what you say. Still, if we were in such an unsatisfactory state, people would have found it out long before this."

"You can soon find out the fact for yourself, Lord Stowe, if you go into the matter."

"Well, I don't profess to have that knowledge of details which you military men possess, but I don't speak of what I know myself. Look at other people—look at the public generally, and the army itself, they all seem pretty satisfied with the present state of things."

"I suppose the public generally think that it is not their business to consider these things, but the business of the people who are paid to look after them. As for the army, you would not think it viewed the present system with complacency if you knew it as well as I do. The army does not swear as it used to do in Flanders—that would be thought bad manners nowadays; but it expresses itself very forcibly about our department, I can assure you. But they feel, and feel truly, that there is no good making a row; the reform must come from within if it is to be successful."

"But you speak as if there were no military men in the office whereas there are plenty, and they all seem perfectly satisfied with the present state of things. Take Burley, for instance; he is a general officer, and a man of great experience, yet he does not share your alarmist views."

"Burley is no doubt a General and a K.C.B., and all the rest of it, but he has not done any military duty, I believe, for the last thirty

years. His life seems to have gone in compiling blue-books and taking out averages. Besides, it strikes me that most of these people have had such long terms of office duty that they have come to look at things with official eyes. That is why I trouble you so soon. I wish to speak from first impressions, before I too fall under the spell of office."

Lord Stowe looked particularly sagacious as, after a pause, he replied, that while it was very gratifying to perceive my zeal in the public service, and he was deeply interested in what I said, yet I could hardly be aware what a reform of this kind meant. It must be made a Cabinet question to begin with; and he doubted if Mr. Merrifield would go into the thing, for he hated military matters. Yet without his active aid nothing could be done. Better therefore let things be. There was no chance of doing anything in our time. Our Government was not strong, and we had quite enough of difficulties about us as it was, without creating fresh ones. Let us hope the necessity for undertaking military operations would not arise in our day.

Such was the substance of what the Minister said, and while he said it I saw that I had gone too far; for he gave me the impression of a man who suddenly found that he was shut up in the same room with a dangerous lunatic, and was talking to humour him. And indeed when I looked at Lord Stowe, as he turned round on his chair to face me, his feet on a stool, displaying neat shoestrings and comfortable woollen socks, with the ends of his drawers coming down over them, his cool waistcoat, spruce necktie, ample shirt-collar, and light hair, tinged with grey, brushed well up over his forehead, the picture altogether of a respectable elderly commonplace official, the absurdity of associating

any grand scheme of army reform with such a presence presented itself very vividly to my mind.

The silence remained unbroken for a few moments, during which the question occurred to me, what, would be the state of things in case of an invasion, or supposing an army had to be sent on some foreign expedition? I pictured to myself Lord Stowe on horseback at Tilbury receiving an invasion at the head of the troops, or Lord Stowe in his cabinet dictating comprehensive instructions for embarking an army. And I thought that if a hundred thousand men, or fifty, or even ten thousand, had to be sent, say to Belgium, what chance would they have of getting there under the auspices of my venerable friend? I could not help thinking too of the turmoil that the departure of these ten thousand would create; the telegrams that would come and go; how our letters received would mount up to two thousand a-day, to the distraction of the registry branch and the pride of the office; of the orders and counter-orders that would issue; of the extra clerks that would be entertained; of the banging of doors and running in and out of *commissaires* that would go on; of the minutes that Burley would write in a perfectly illegible hand; how, finally, the ten thousand men would probably arrive in Belgium without anything to eat, and having left their ammunition behind them; how the noble lord would sit there, cool and comfortable, in his office, as now, writing notes to his dear Sophia, and believing that he was pulling the wires in approved departmental fashion, until awakened by the outbursting of national indignation that would follow our disasters; of the royal commissions and committees that would sit, and the interminable evidence that would be taken, all tending to show that

nobody in particular was to blame ; how at last the country would set about building up a new system which would take another twenty years to collapse in its turn.

Such ideas crossed each other in my mind as we sat in that cool room looking out on the gardens, the blind drawn down to keep out the glare, the silence broken only by the gentle murmur of movement in the corridors, and the rumble of an occasional carriage along the road below. Meanwhile Lord Stowe glanced down at his unfinished note, and then looked at me, as much as to say that he hoped I was going away.

Mingled with my feeling of vexation at having so mismanaged my case and miscalculated the nature of the man I had to deal with, was a sense of the absurdity of the situation. But I determined to make another effort.

"Excuse my detaining you so long, Lord Stowe ; but there is still one point I want to mention. These autumn manœuvres. They give the office a tremendous lot of extra work."

"They do indeed, and cut into our holidays terribly. I was just writing to my girls, who are in Switzerland, to tell them I saw no chance of joining them till quite late in the autumn."

"Still, apart from any probability of war, I suppose it is intended the camp of exercise should be made, so far as possible, a practical school of training for the troops ?"

"Certainly ; and I have always been given to understand that their effect is highly beneficial." And Lord Stowe spoke a little petulantly, as much as to say, how many manœuvres is this officious young person going to discover ?

"Would it not be desirable then to carry on the affair as much as

possible after the fashion of real campaigning ?"

"That is precisely what I am given to understand is done. The troops live in tents, and have their outpost duty, and marching, and so forth, just as in real war—everything except the actual fighting."

"Has your lordship seen Sir Mordaunt Burley's beef and bread map ?"

"You mean his chart for the distribution of provisions ? Yes ; it seemed to me very clear and ingenious."

"Yes ; but then is it to be supposed for a moment that troops could be fed on active service by supplies shot down in this way from London, when the smallest mistake, such as the miscarriage of a telegram, may make everything go wrong ? Besides, what sort of training is it for the generals and staff to be kept in leading strings in this way, and fed like helpless children ?"

"Well, but you are objecting to what I am given to understand is a fundamental principle of organisation—namely, the separation of the duties of supply from those of commanding the troops."

"I doubt if the Duke of Wellington acted on that fundamental principle, when he fed and fought his army in Spain. But now, I would venture to make a suggestion. There is a vote of fifty and some odd thousand pounds taken for these manœuvres. Why not make over the money to the general commanding, and let him make his own arrangements for feeding the troops ? Then this camp would be something like a real training school."

Lord Stowe said he hardly knew what to think of this. At any rate, he should like to talk it over with some of the heads of departments. He would see me again about it some other day. Just now, he feared he could not pursue the sub-

ject. It was actually half-past three, and there was a Cabinet Council at four; but he was really very much

obliged for what I had said, and hoped to have a great deal more conversation with me on the subject.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—IN WHICH HERCULES DOES NOT SWEEP OUT THE STABLE.

Bowed out in this way I felt baffled, and a feeling of depression came over me as I now became sensible of the apparent hopelessness of the task. To move this great machine needed evidently a great effort of will in the highest places, and the idea I had in my ingenuousness confided to Herries, of setting the machine going properly merely by pulling the wires, was clearly a vain one. There is little use in pulling wires which have no spring at the end of them.

In my despair I sought out Bracton, and confided my sorrow to him.

Bracton was a very different sort of man from Lord Stowe, but I cannot say he gave me much more cause for comfort.

"I have no doubt all you say is quite true," he observed, although I could trace a tinge of scepticism in his voice, implying that he suspected me of a taint of junkerism; "from what I can see, there's an awful waste of red tape in this shop, and three times too many fingers at work on it; but it's no good entering on a grand scheme of reform with old Stowe at the top of the office. You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear," continued Bracton, who usually expressed himself in homely idiomatic fashion. "Anybody who knows what Lord Wraymouth has been for the last twenty years, knows what to expect of Lord Stowe. That cock won't fight, you may depend. The fact is, if he hadn't come into his title and twenty thousand a-year, he wouldn't be in the Cabinet at all."

"But Lord Stowe need not stay here for ever?"

"He will stay in as long as we do,

I suspect. I feel very much with you; that is, I can see very plainly that there is great room for simplifying, that there is too much meddling, and doing other people's work for them. But then, where's the time to come from for setting things right? It's about even that we shan't pull through this session."

"But wouldn't army reform be a good card to play, and help to strengthen the Government just now?"

"I doubt it. The country is getting to be tired of the subject. Besides, Merrifield has a lot of things on his hands just now, and won't thank you for weighting him still more——"

"Well, but if Merrifield is the economist he professes to be, he ought to be very glad of any honest chance to save public money. And there is plenty of room for saving here."

"Yes, but think what a hornet's nest you bring about you if you propose reductions in the department. No, if you go in for the cutting down lay, begin with the outsiders who haven't got any friends. And after all, West, I am bound to say that although you soldiers are always talking about this office being overgrown, other people say just the same about the army; that there are too many officers and too many generals, too many everything, except the rank and file."

"There is plenty of room for manipulation in that direction, I admit. Dear me, if Pendragon and those fellows who go about stumping the country on the army reform question knew all that I and

other military men know, they would have made a sensation and no mistake, and produced some results before this. But there is no good tinkering here and there, while this Augean stable remains unswept. I should like to see reforms begin with the parts that need them most."

"If you take my advice you will begin with the parts that take least trouble."

With this our conversation ended, leaving it pretty evident that there was not much help to be looked for from Mr. Bracton.

The promised meeting for discussing my proposals duly came off, after sundry reminders administered to our chief. That astute statesman took the chair, sitting at the top of the large table kept for such purposes in his room, and Bracton, Burley, Mr. Tregarth, and myself were of course present; but I was surprised to find that Mr. Aweditte, the Reviewer-General, an officer nominally subordinate to my branch, was invited to be of the party, and also Mr. Lougher Wrythem, who was only a clerk; but Burley whispered to me that the former's great familiarity with military details of all kinds entitled him to share in discussions of this sort, and that Mr. Lougher Wrythem was great at actuarial calculations, which might very likely be needed. It struck me that the opinions of one or two experienced officers might be more useful than actuarial calculations in a matter of this sort, and as I was the only military man present except Burley, who was only a nominal soldier, I suggested that it might be well to ask the chief of the staff to join us; but Burley objected that this was to be a discussion on an important financial principle in which the military part of the department could not properly have a voice.

"Now then," said Lord Stowe

blandly when we were seated, "perhaps Captain West will favour us with the suggestions he is desirous of bringing under the consideration of the department."

Thus called upon, I made my proposal, namely, that the grant for the manœuvres of the year should be made over to the generals commanding the two sides, to be laid out by their staff in feeding and moving the troops on their responsibility. This would give them experience in one of the most difficult parts of military duty. The work of the camp would then really resemble closely what has to be done on active service, with this difference, however, that whereas in the latter case the general's power to spend money is practically uncontrolled, he would here be limited strictly by the grant. The value of this sort of training to the military as well as the local civil staff, I urged, could hardly be overestimated.

There was a pause after my little speech, while Lord Stowe looked round the table as much as to say: you have heard what this lunatic proposes, gentlemen; now will some one put a strait-waistcoat on him?

Mr. Aweditte was the first to speak, which he did with a deprecating smile and manner, such as a nurse might use with a wilful child which must be treated with kindness, although it cannot be made to understand the reasons why it cannot have what it wants. Perhaps he might be allowed to explain that what Captain West proposed was not in fact practicable, because in that case the expenditure would not follow the course of the Parliamentary votes. The vote for the manœuvres did not include the ordinary expenses for feeding the troops, and so forth, but only the extraordinary expenses.

"Exactly so," broke in Burley, "vote P, page 154, item 19;" whereon

Lord Stowe, who, like all of us, had a copy of the army estimates before him, hunted up the item with his double eyeglass, and having found it bowed towards Burley and looked round the table, as much as to say there was no doubt about the fact, and that it certainly told very much against me.

Mr. Aweditte went on. Very good. Then, he submitted, it was quite evident the Paymaster-General's proposal would be impracticable. Further it would involve a complete alteration in the mode of conducting the issue of funds for the army, in fact of the very duties performed by his (the Paymaster-General's) own office as prescribed in the act of Parliament and the Warrant.

I replied that of course alterations involved that something should be altered. It was not necessary to make a long speech to explain that. It was precisely an alteration, and a very radical one, that I was aiming at.

Then Mr. Lougher Wrythem broke in, also in deprecating fashion, for a Parliamentary official (especially if he can speak without stammering) is a man to be treated with a certain degree of deference, even although he be young and foolish. Might he (Mr. Wrythem) venture to hint that the Paymaster-General's scheme would be in violation of the cardinal principle, that the army expenditure should be subject to civil control. If there was one principle more firmly established than another it was this, and he might venture to say it was one to override which would be fraught with the gravest consequences.

"But who wants to override it?" I replied. "Admitting the principle to the fullest extent, although, by the way, you have not stated it fully, for the principle is not so much that all military matters shall be controlled by this office, as that all military matters, including this office

and everything else connected with the army, shall be subject to the control of Parliament; but letting that pass, I fail to see how my scheme interferes with any principle, or at least any sound one. It certainly aims at cutting down this over-centralisation which is the bane of our present system, but it leaves the control of the Secretary of State over the estimates every bit as complete and undisputed as before."

"How can that be," asked Burley, "if you take away the supervision of the expenditure from the department, and vest it in persons at the other end of the kingdom?"

"But the final control would still rest with the Secretary of State just as much in the one case as the other. No one supposes that the Secretary of State issues the money and checks off the expenditure of the department in person. He does all this through subordinate officials responsible to himself, and so he would continue to do under the plan I have suggested."

"Yes, but these are officials acting under his orders and removable at his pleasure, and experienced more-over in managing this sort of business."

"Experienced in doing things the wrong way, I suspect, which is worse than not having experience at all. But letting that pass again, I ask, are not the generals and staff of the army, and the local control officers, acting under the orders of the Secretary of State just as much as the clerks of this office, and cannot he remove any one of them from employment if he sees occasion to do so?"

"But surely you would not propose to put military men to control other military men in financial matters?"

"Why not? There are plenty of soldiers who are only so in name,"—I could not help thinking of Burley at the moment, who had probably

not been on horseback for the last thirty years—"but every soldier is a citizen, and does not take leave of his wits or his rights by putting on uniform. There is quite as much common-sense to be found in the army as in this office, I assure you, and quite as much sense of responsibility. Do you suppose that if you give a general twenty thousand pounds to spend, and hold him responsible for not exceeding the amount, there would be any danger of his doing so? The danger, I believe, is quite the other way; we keep all our officers in such tight leading-strings all their life that the fear is they would be found unequal to the responsibility if it were put upon them. And after all I am not speaking about the *audit*; the final audit of the accounts would, of course, rest with the audit department, as at present: my proposal refers only to the power of initiation."

"This scheme is so entirely novel," said Mr. Aweditte, after a pause, "that I am hardly prepared to reply at once, but I foresee numerous objections."

"I deny that it is novel. It may be here; but in India, where they do understand the art of administration—although they have their faults too—and how to work a military machine that shall not collapse when the first strain is put upon it, the principle is fully understood and acted upon. In India you have military men as disbursers, and accountants and auditors too, and I appeal to Sir Mordaunt Burley, who knows the facts just as well as I do, although he may not have been in India, whether the Government control there is any weaker in consequence; whether, on the contrary, the complaint is not that the supervision of these military officers is not too rigorous and exacting? But we need not go to India for illustrations. What happens on every occasion of

war? Don't you then make your generals supreme in everything, over life and death, even over the money-chest?"

"Yes, but a state of war is a different thing."

"You may well say so, and so you would find if war were to break out. And can anything more severe be said in condemnation of your system than that it is only intended to work in peace time? Yet that is the truth, though I suppose it will take a war and a catastrophe for the nation to discover it. People will then wake up to find that this costly, this overdone, this cumbersome centralised machine, which you have been building up since the Crimean war, which only works now with infinite friction and creaking and groaning at every joint, only works at all in time of peace, and will collapse when the first strain is put upon it, and then it and we shall be swept away amid the indignant outcry of an indignant nation."

This was strong language, indeed a great deal more than I had intended to say; but in fact, I lost my temper, and the discussion now became warm and somewhat personal, Burley declaring that on behalf of the department he treated these insinuations with the contempt they deserved, adding something about youth and ignorance, while I retorted that it was quite possible to be old and stupid, till eventually Lord Stowe interposed, and at first hardly with success, to allay the storm. "Gentlemen, gentlemen," he said, "pray consider that we are here to discuss public business; pray do not let us allow personal considerations to interfere with public affairs; pray do not, &c., &c." The result, however, was that, after a great deal of talk bearing very little upon the matter in hand, the meeting broke up without

any definite conclusion being come to, and therefore leaving things as they were. The only person who remained at all cool in the matter, except our noble chairman, who was as good a hand at pouring out oil as my former colleague the chairman of the Agricultural and Commercial Assurance Company, was Bracton; but he did not prove the ally that I had looked for, the substance of his remarks being to the effect that there appeared a good deal of force in what Captain West urged, but that a matter of this kind, affecting the principles of conducting a great department, would need to be carefully considered. Bracton evidently did not expect to remain long in the office, and had no mind to take a fresh burden on his shoulders; and I must add the suspicion did occur to me that there may be such a thing as jealousy of one

another, even among Government officials.

"This comes of bringing a peppery captain of horse into the office," said Mr. Wrythem to Mr. Aweditte, in audible tones, as they went downstairs together. Such, no doubt, I had appeared, and thoroughly dissatisfied I felt with the result of the meeting; ashamed of having lost my temper so easily; disheartened at the prospect of so much opposition, especially at the mass of inertia that would resist all progress. I felt, too, how much ground I had lost by this short morning's work. Henceforward, I felt certain, Lord Stowe would avoid interviews and discussions, and Aweditte and the other permanent officials would regard me as an impulsive young simpleton, to be humoured but made little account of in the business of the place.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—LEATHERBY IN ARMS.

As I walked home that evening, dispirited and annoyed, I felt half tempted to give up my post, and return to the rôle of independent member. Free from official shackles, I could say what I pleased, and one might create a very pretty sensation by stumping the country after Pendragon's fashion, and denouncing our military maladministration. But then it would be mean to make use of official knowledge in this way; and besides, what good would come of it eventually? If the head of a department (albeit a subordinate one) was powerless for reform, what chance would any one outside the department have by any amount of declamation, either in Parliament or out of it? This plan then was not to be thought of seriously; there was nothing to be done but to hold on, and trust to time and the chapter

of accidents for bringing about something better.

Meanwhile happily a diversion was afforded by the coming manoeuvres. The preparation for them had kept us all in town far into August, but to run down into Yewcestershire was now fairly in the way of business.

The mimic campaign promised to be more than usually interesting. How the Government ever came to work itself up to the point of sanctioning the expenditure for operations in such a distant region, I hardly know; and indeed they would gladly have drawn back if they could when the estimates came to be added up; but such an outcry was raised at the rumor of this, and Mr. Strickland, who was a very influential member and had taken a great interest in the scheme for using his county as the scene of action,

expressed himself so warmly about it, and the *Dial* came out with such continuous articles on the unequalled advantage of Arrowdown as a training-ground, that it was determined to stick to the plan, and to reduce expense by cutting down the size of the force to be employed. Two skeleton army corps were to be formed, of about ten thousand men each, whereof one, starting from Drymouth as a base, was to advance northwards. The other was to be formed in two separate divisions, one of which, conveyed to the spot in the Channel squadron, was to make a landing in the Bay of Birdseye; while the second, advancing from Yewcester and Leatherby up the valley of the Yew, was to form a junction with the first, when the united corps would move southwards and drive back the defenders on their base. The latter, on the other hand, were to try and prevent the junction, and to hurl back the invading division on the sea. Thus, besides land manœuvres on an unusually extended scale, there would be a disembarkation and all its concomitant difficulties; so that the autumnal practice promised to be unusually interesting and useful.

The excitement at Leatherby when we got down there was tremendous, for a regiment of hussars had arrived the day before, to say nothing of a battalion of the Guards, Leatherby being the point where the railway had to be abandoned for the road, and these were now encamped on various bits of open ground about the place, while men and officers in all the splendour of full albeit rather shabby uniform thronged the little streets. Considering that the greatest military spectacle ever witnessed before had been the occasional apparition of a recruiting sergeant and the drilling of the local company of Volunteers, the general exaltation of feeling

that prevailed may be imagined, while the popularity of Lord Stowe and myself, who were credited with the furnishing of all this amusement and excitement for the edification of the borough—to say nothing of the spurt given to the local market—went up to quite a point of enthusiasm, which naturally culminated in the grand banquet got up in our honour, a ceremonial which came off with great *éclat* in a spacious marquee brought over from Yewcester for the occasion. The dinner, supplied by our esteemed fellow-townsmen the proprietor of the Three Butts, was served up in his usual well-known style, covers being laid for fifty-seven. Mr. Rupert Bowles took the chair, having Lord Stowe on his right and the Paymaster-General on his left, while the banquet—in addition to Mr. Strickland, Mr. Sheepshanks, and other local magnates—was graced by the presence of Colonel the Honourable Bayrskyn Shakkow and officers Scots Grenadier Guards, Lieut.-Colonel Leitwayte and officers 22d Hussars, “all in full regimentals,” said the *Leatherby Express*,—which came out with a special extra gratis edition next day, descriptive of the festive occasion,—“the splendour glitter of which set off admirably the quiet but refined aspect of the darker costume worn by the rest of the company.” The same paper of course reported in full detail the “really eloquent speech of their respected fellow-townsmen who so ably filled the chair,” proposing the health of their late and present members; as well as Lord Stowe’s “sonorous yet humorous reply.” And indeed his lordship came out in his best bow-wow manner; and when he described how the idea had first occurred to him of having the manœuvres “at what he might, from long and dear associations, almost venture to term his native

place (great applause); how, when the peculiar advantages offered for training in the art of war by the noble uplands of this county presented themselves to his mind, he had, by the advice and aid of his colleagues, his able and gallant and experienced colleagues (continued applause), determined to carry out the idea; how, notwithstanding the difficulties and discouragement that beset his path, he, that is, the department over which he had the honour to preside, had persevered to the end, till now the fruit of his labours might be seen in the martial array which at this moment surrounded the spacious—well, the spacious structure in which this magnificent entertainment was being held," and so forth; then his gratified audience, excited at once by this inspiriting declamation and the sparkling Yewcestershire cider which graced the banquet, became wrought up to a pitch of enthusiasm, until they got for the moment to regard the noble speaker as a sort of incarnation of Napoleon and Von Moltke rolled into one; little suspecting, while his lordship was thus enthusiastic himself about the manœuvres, and the cause of enthusiasm in others, how bored he was in reality with the whole thing, and longing to be off to Switzerland with his dear Sophia and the rest of the family, for Lord Stowe was a thoroughly domestic man. And I doubt if he was altogether pleased at being bracketed in the honours of the occasion with a comparatively subordinate official. On this latter point I could sympathise with—but it was quite impossible to make my constituents under the difference between a Cabinet Minister and a junior member of the Government like myself—seen by the foreshortening of the Leatheryby perspective, a Secretary of State and a Pay-

master-General seemed both such great personages as to be practically equal. I confess that I had laboured under the delusion of the same sort before taking office, fancying in my simplicity that the members of the Government, even including those not in the Cabinet, would be like a band of brothers, always discussing state secrets and matters of deep import together, whereas in fact our only bond of union was the sitting upon the same bench in the house. Even there we juniors sat up at the far end, and we knew no more what was going on out of our own department (very often of what was going on in it) than the office messengers, and, except in the cases where there was private intimacy, we were hardly on speaking terms with each other. Mr. Merrifield indeed used to ask us to dinner in turns, just as Dr. Church, when I was at Mugby, used to ask the sixth-form fellows in to breakfast; but I doubt if the Duke of Ulster (Mr. Merrifield's brother-in-law), or Lord Grandison, who were the two greatest swells in the Ministry, knew some of us even by sight.

But this is a digression. Leatheryby topics should be done justice to, and the greatest after the banquet was unquestionably Mrs. Scrap's garden-party, which came off the following afternoon. The occasion was a great one, and the lady was equal to it. The invitation to the Guards and the Hussars unfortunately came too late, for those distinguished regiments had marched off towards Stampton early in the morning, the inspiriting strains of their bands waking up the inhabitants as they slept off the effects of the entertainment; and the only representatives of the profession remaining were a young assistant-surgeon, left behind in charge of some sick men (and who on the strength of his cocked hat was re-

garded by the population as being almost a general officer), and some officers of the Control Department, which body was now cast loose all over the country, scattered about the towns and villages by twos and threes like a regiment of cavalry on outpost duty, and whose martial appearance in their sabres and pouch-belts gave almost as much satisfaction to the community as if they had really belonged to that branch of the service. But Lord Stowe had been secured, looking as pleased as if the lawn at Holly Lodge had been the slopes of Windsor, and he alone would have made the party a success. Mr. Strickland was there too, which was even a more gratifying circumstance, for he had been always a greater magnet in Yewcestershire than Lord Stowe, who, when Lord Wraymouth, had been disposed to make himself rather cheap. Mrs. Scrap had flown to Eva on her arrival at Church Street two days before, and it was amusing to notice the altered manner with which that good lady regarded my wife. The patronising affectionateness of our last stay was now succeeded by affectionate admiration; for had not Eva's name appeared in the list of visitors at various fashionable receptions and even on still more distinguished occasions; besides, was she not understood to be on the most intimate terms with Mrs. Strickland? This, indeed, was connected with her visit. "You can't think what a number of funny things Mrs. Scrap has been saying," Eva observed that evening; "but she ended by saying there was a very particular favour she wanted us to do, and that is to convey—well, I don't exactly remember how she put it, for it was such a long story; but she wants the Stricklands to come to her party, and she wants me or us to manage it for her. What is

to be done?" "I don't mind asking Strickland, if I see him to-morrow," was my reply, "for he is a good-natured fellow enough, but I would certainly rather not say anything to the ladies about it; there are limits even to the audacity of a borough member." And I was probably right; for when next day I met him on the street—the Stricklands were staying with the Bamfylde—and told him that a very charming lady and sound Liberal was anxious to secure some of the distinguished company with which the neighbourhood was now thronged for her garden-party, he said at once *he* would go with pleasure,—laying, however, such a stress on the personal pronoun, as intimated that he could not be responsible for anybody else. However, Tom Strickland, whose battalion was not engaged in the manoeuvres, and who came down from town just in time, was secured for the occasion; but I regret to say that he behaved somewhat inconsiderately, keeping beside Sybil and Eva the whole afternoon, and hardly speaking to his hostess. Mr. Strickland did not get off so easily, for Mrs. Scrap having secured his arm for a promenade on the grounds, he was in a manner tied down.

"A very pretty place you have here," he observed.

"It is a pretty little place, we think," replied the lady; "but of course very small compared to what you are accustomed to."

"And what a pretty view you have!" added the gentleman, turning the conversation: "Leatherby looks pretty from every point, but I don't know a nicer view of it than this."

"Yes, it is very pretty, we think. I am told that the views from Stampton Court are very fine?"

How her companion replied to this home-thrust I did not hear.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—AUTUMN MANŒUVRES.

Although Leatherby had been thus thrown into excitement by the advent of the military, the spectacle was but transitory, for the town was quite out of the scene of operations. Stampton, which lay nestled on the upper Yew, just on the edge of the moorland, formed the real point of departure of the right flank of the force, and a large party had been invited to witness the manœuvres from Stampton Court, including Mr. Merrifield and his family, who were expected to arrive in a day or two. We had moved on thither the morning after the garden-party, and found a brigade encamped in the park, with outposts pushed on to the edge of the moors beyond, the white tents glistening among the noble oaks; while the little town, if such it could be called, of Stampton, was crowded with visitors. Arrowdown was always affected to a certain extent by autumn tourists, and now that the benefit of its breezy air could be enjoyed simultaneously with a view of the manœuvres, quite a locust-like flight of visitors had set in. The Red Lion had been engaged bodily for the representatives of foreign armies, the White Horse was brimful of umpires, and every conceivable form of vehicle appeared to have been impressed for the occasion. Lord Stowe had taken up his quarters in the neighbouring residence of his relative the Earl of Ben Nevis; while Burley had secured lodgings for himself and his bread-and-beef charts over the grocer's shop, with the use of an ancient diminutive barouche drawn by a pair of still more diminutive ponies. At Stampton Court we found that a sort of saturnalia had replaced the quiet which ordinarily characterised

that well-regulated household. A perpetual garden-party seemed to be going on; the public rooms and the terrace on which they looked out were thronged with visitors: county squires, London folks, foreign officers in blue, foreign officers in green, British officers in red; officers in bluchers, officers in gaiters, officers with haversacks, all coming and going; five o'clock tea in the drawing-room, popping of champagne on the lawn; the correspondent of an illustrated paper meanwhile taking a sketch of the proceedings right in front of the windows. Mrs. Strickland was literally keeping open house, for as many people came in by the windows as by the doors, and the ceremony of obtaining a previous invitation appeared to be dispensed with for the occasion. Soldiering and soldiers were not the commonplace objects they have come to be in more central regions; and from the general state of excitement and relaxation of etiquette it was almost as if the campaign were a real one, and Stampton Court under military requisition. Late into the warm night the doors remained open, and warriors and other visitors came and went between the house and the village and camp; and standing on the terrace one might detect the subdued murmur of the troops resting in the park below, the occasional neigh of a horse breaking the silence.

But there may be too much of a good thing, and our genial host can scarcely have been sorry when the troops broke up from their camp and marched off towards the moor, the only relics of their presence being a broken-down sutler's cart or two, the dust, the paths

which even in that short time had been worn in the green turf, and the straw and litter which would not be effaced till the winter rains came down. Riding up on to the moors that afternoon the troops seemed at first sight to have vanished altogether, for no sign of them was to be detected on the wide expanse, as we looked across one of the largest prospects to be seen in our island. But the disappearance was soon explained. The great moor, which looked when seen from one end like a broad plain, was in reality intersected by numerous narrow glens, well wooded for the most part and sheltering small hamlets, and all containing the brawling streams of water without which the campaign would have been impossible. Down in these glens were pitched the various camps, the high lands being occupied by the pickets, which a more careful examination could detect. And in one of these glens we found our hosts of the day, pitched by the side of a little brook, which tumbled along to join the Yew, its waters abounding with diminutive trout. This was our first day's experience of the campaign. The operations in the early part would be near enough to allow of our return each day to Stampton Court; but Mr. Strickland had arranged, when the troops should work more to the westward, for transferring the headquarters of his party to a shooting-box some twenty miles off across the moor, where it was expected we should be in the very centre of operations.

"A splendid country this certainly is for manœuvres," said he, as we rode home that afternoon; "it was really quite a stroke of genius in Stowe to think of choosing it, for which I should not have given him credit. Plenty of room here for manœuvring, and for exhibiting skill in keeping up the supplies."

"Very good for the handful of men we have here, so long as the weather is fine, and a capital place to test the powers of our shop in Pall Mall to feed them. And if anxious forethought, and deliberation, and multiplicity of rules, and telegrams, and staying in office after hours, and generally doing other people's business ten times over, will insure success, then success will be accomplished. But we run it very fine. We shall just pull through, I daresay; but give us five hundred men more to move, and we and our five hundred clerks would have broken down. Anyhow the beautiful complexity of the machine would surprise and delight you. The Strasburg clock or Babbage's calculating machine is nothing to what we can show in the way of wheel-work. But, dear me, I ought not to be telling tales out of school in this fashion."

These remarks had scarcely been made, when, as if by way of commentary, we were suddenly greeted by young O'Hagan, the member for North Cork, who was touring in these parts got up like a theatrical *krankenträger*, and who came running up excitedly as we entered the park gates, which opened upon one of the streets of the town.

"Holloa, West, you are the very man I am looking for; I have just been up to the house to try to find you. There are a lot of people over at Minton absolutely starving."

"Where's Minton?"

"Away up on the moor yonder, about seven miles north of this. Three companies of the 110th, a fine set of young fellows, as you saw; there's a bare plain, to eat or drink, no river, and waterco. The This

from Withicombe-on-Sea that morning with orders to halt for the night at Minton, where, they were told, they would find rations and forage, to be sent out under the orders of the assistant-controller at Stampton. But arriving there after a twenty-mile march, towards the afternoon, they found nothing awaiting them. There was not a village for miles, and no signs of other troops; and but that O'Hagan came upon them in his ride their situation would never have been discovered, for this point was quite beyond the line of operations.

"The major in command seemed puzzled what to do," continued O'Hagan, "as well he might be, for his cattle were all done up by the bad roads. I would have lent him money to buy food, willingly; but what would be the good of a five-pound note to a man, and he without so much as a baker's shop within hail?"

Clearly these unfortunates could not be left to starve, and O'Hagan and I hurried off down the street in search of some member of the Control Department. Nor were we long in finding one, but he was quite a subordinate and could not help us. He was in charge of the reserve supplies, he said, and only issued stores from the reserve to the different field-magazines; he had nothing to do with the issue of anything direct to the troops, nor could he by any means break through the rules without orders from a superior. Clearly the worthy official did not recognise the Paymaster-General as coming under that category, possibly because he had never heard my name before. So there was no help to be got from him; but while we were discussing the matter, two more officers of the department returning from the camp came in sight, trotting slowly up the street, with the air of men who had

done a day's work. To them the impulsive O'Hagan told his tale.

One of the two officers seemed inclined to doubt the accuracy of the account. The 110th did not belong to their division, and could not have been sent across the moor without notice being given. The quartermaster-general's department always sent them notice of changes of movement, so that the supplies might be arranged accordingly.

The other officer observed, that at any rate it was no business of theirs, for that Minton would be in the yellow circle, to be fed from Withicombe-on-Sea, and producing his map he showed us a patch of yellow colour covering the northern part of it. "That's the Withicombe Control Circle, you see, and there is Minton within the yellow boundary. We only feed the troops so long as they are within the green circle, number two, and that you see does not come within a good mile of Minton. I am really very sorry, gentlemen, but I do not see how I can help you in the matter. Are you quite sure," he added, turning to O'Hagan, "that the detachment is actually at Minton? Because if it happened to be encamped a mile to the south, why then, it might be regarded as coming within the green circle, and I think I could strain a point, and manage to send these men some food, although, strictly speaking, it would be against orders to do so."

While O'Hagan was looking as if trying to remember whether the detachment was not after all encamped exactly one mile south of the village, another actor appeared on the scene in the person of Sir Mordaunt Burley himself, whose diminutive barouche came rumbling down the little street towards the grocer's shop, the proprietor leaning back therein with his arms folded, and an expression of unutterable sagacity beaming in his face, a roll

of the bread-and-beef chart occupying the back seat. Him stopping in the street, O'Hagan appealed to for aid, telling over again his sad tale.

Sir Mordaunt Burley thought there must be some mistake. "But no matter," he added, with an air of sublime determination, "we will not stand on ceremony in the matter: the detachment shall be fed, Mr. O'Hagan—the detachment shall be fed; our system is a very elastic one,—such cases as these are easily dealt with. Issue the rations at once, Mr. Forredge, if you please; issue the rations at once."

"But the Chief-Controller," urged that official, hesitatingly, "the Chief-Controller has given orders——"

"Consider me your Chief-Controller, sir," broke in Burley, majestically, from the barouche; "obey my orders implicitly in this matter, sir, if you please, and I will absolve you from all consequences." And Burley glanced at the bystanders, as much as to say, "these rules are all very well for ordinary officials, but true greatness rises superior to them. Genius begins where rules end."

Having thus helped us over our difficulty, Burley proceeded on his road; but O'Hagan determining to see his mission accomplished, we followed Mr. Forredge to the depot, where the official in charge, one Commissary Wrayshun, the same who had been deaf to our first remonstrances, proceeded to pack a cart with the needful supplies, but in a grave and reproachful manner, as if the issue of stores direct from the reserve to a detachment, without being passed through a divisional or even a brigade depot, jarred against his sense of the innate fitness of things.

But the matter did not end even here, for while we were looking on at the packing of the cart, another officer of the department, senior to Mr. Forredge, came riding up. To him, mutely inquiring by his manner what grave irregularity was in course of being committed, the young member again recounted the condition of the ill-fated detachment.

The senior brightened up at once. "Oh yes," he said, "of course. I am really very sorry, but it is partly my fault, I fear. I quite forgot to give notice about it; but our general had a telegram this morning, to say the 110th would be transferred to his division. This, of course, accounts for the whole affair. I fully meant to have communicated the matter to the department. But all this comes," he added, apologetically, "of doing things in such an irregular manner. What business have general officers to be making changes of this sort in the distribution of the troops without giving proper notice to the department? I am sure Sir Mordaunt Burley would never approve of such proceedings."

"I don't know what Sir Mordaunt Burley may approve or disapprove," said O'Hagan, indignantly, as we walked away from the scene, "and I don't care; but I know this, that I'll denounce the whole proceedings as positively infamous from my place in Parliament." [The vehement young member pronounced the word as if it were spelt *Pahrlemint*.]

I felt that it would not become me to join with an outsider in running down a department with which I was officially connected, so made no answer.

CHAPTER XXXV.—CRITICAL.

Two days after the occurrence described above, Mr. Strickland transferred the headquarters of himself and his remaining guests, who now comprised ourselves, with Mr., Lady Elizabeth, and Miss Merrifield, from Stampton Court to the shooting-box on the moor. This little cottage contained sleeping accommodation for only a small portion of the party; the remainder were bestowed in a farmhouse about a couple of hundred yards off, but we all assembled for meals in the little parlour, which had just room for us to sit down in. But we were not much indoors; the weather was fine, and each day brought its occupation in the shape of an excursion to the scene of action, for which we started after an early breakfast, the elder ladies in a little carriage drawn by hardy Arrowdown ponies, the rest on horseback, our numbers daily augmented by stray visitors who had found their way out to these remote parts, till our party often developed into a cavalcade only surpassed in number by the infinite elasticity of our host's stable. It was in fact an extended picnic, the unconventional strangeness of which, so different from our ordinary experiences, constituted a charm in itself for all. A life of this sort would of course have been impossible under ordinary circumstances. For a number of people, including a distinguished Minister, to crowd together in a little cottage, even in search of Arrowdown breezes, would have been an absurdity, and no doubt the thing would very soon have been voted a bore; but the neighbourhood of the troops, with generals, foreign deputies, and even still higher personages, all more or less roughing it in canvas on the open moor, rendered our quarters within

four walls comparatively luxurious, albeit there was hardly room to sit round the dining-room; and the little closet adjoining it, which we styled the drawing-room, contained little besides the cottage-piano which had been sent out for the occasion. Under these circumstances all parties seemed to enjoy the roughing, especially such of us as were quartered in the desolate-looking farmhouse, whose occupants' sole excitement up to this time had been their weekly visit to the little market-town twelve miles across the moor, and who in winter were often snowed up for a month together. The only people who grumbled were the ladies'-maids, a brace of whom had improbably been brought out. Everybody else declared this novel life and improvised arrangement to be perfect; the horses which had exchanged their hot stalls for an airy shed appeared to be as well contented as their riders, who occupied the various strange attics and lumber-rooms of the farm which now did duty for bed-chambers; and every one declared that there was no spot on earth for wild beauty and fresh air like Arrowdown, and that to go to Switzerland or Scotland with all these delights so close at hand was mere conventional folly, no one, it so happened, except our hosts, having ever been here before, and every one in his heart intending never to come here again. Fortunately the weather was superb; a few fleecy clouds ever and anon passed along the sky, breaking the broad expanse into checkered lights and shades, borne by the light breeze which banished heat; but the secret of the success of this picnic was that there was no time to become bored. After an early breakfast the whole party sallied forth each day, as al-

ready mentioned, Mrs. Strickland driving Lady Elizabeth Merrifield in a pony-carriage, the rest on horseback, making for the day's scene of action, while a light cart laden with luncheon followed, hovering in our rear, in readiness to supply ammunition when needed, like the waggons of a field-battery. Fortunately, too, the expectation that this shooting-box would prove a convenient centre of operations was realised. Had either of the contending forces been distinctly victorious, the tide of mimic war would soon have rolled away to the north or south, but each side stubbornly maintained its ground. The country was too open for successful surprises in the way of flank marches, while it placed the force attempting a direct attack in front at a great disadvantage. Day after day the contending generals manoeuvred and fought, but so little advantage could be claimed for either side that each evening the umpires must fain declare the contest drawn, and both sides entitled to maintain their ground. Thus, although the troops were on their legs all day, and long marches were made one way and another, we could see all that took place, and yet return each afternoon to dinner, the ladies in high spirits, sunburnt and hungry; while under the effect of exercise, appetite, and bracing air combined, everybody became exceedingly sleepy directly after dinner, and the cottage-piano was put very little into requisition.

It needs not be said that personally this visit was peculiarly welcome, independently of the pleasure of the occasion itself, and the fresh healthy life. It is of course gratifying to be asked to join a party in *deshabille* when a great Minister is one of the company, for when thrown together in this way, people see more of each other in a week than would

otherwise be possible in a lifetime. I knew, of course, that Mr. Merrifield could yawn like ordinary folks, having often seen him perform that operation in the House, but it was interesting to notice the freshness with which he entered into the novel life, and the zest he exhibited for the small details of the occasion. Business, indeed, could not be got rid of even on Arrowdown, and express messengers provided by Mr. Strickland brought out daily despatch-boxes from Stampton for the Minister; but he managed to dispose of their contents when the rest of the party were in their rooms, and to all appearance had as much leisure as the rest of us, declaring that he had never enjoyed so complete a holiday before.

Lord Stowe also complained, when we met him on the moor, that he too could not escape from business; but my private belief is that he did nothing whatever, and that the work of the department, such as there was, was conducted by Bracton, who remained behind in town. But in fact the department was so busily engaged in looking after the miniature army in the field before us, that the rest of the British army was allowed to take care of itself for a season. "Things seem admirably managed, in my opinion," said Lord Stowe, whom we met one day riding through the camp, mounted on a stout and slow-moving pony, his trousers in the course of equitation having worked well up his legs, displaying a margin of comfortable socks above his ankle boots. "See here, the fighting is barely over, and the men have got their tents, and their fuel, and their rations, and are cooking their dinners already. What have you got there, my man?" said his lordship, addressing one of a group of soldiers engaged upon a camp kitchen, who appeared from his air of authority to be the *chef*

de cuisine; "what have you got in that pot?"

"Well," said the man all unconscious, like the child accosted by the fairy, what superior company he was in, "they calls it a sausage; least-ways a German sausage. 'Tain't an English one, that's certain."

"And very good a German sausage is, too," observed his lordship; "I should like to taste it, my friend, if you will allow me."

The man hesitated for a moment, but we were a large party, and he held up the sausage on the lid of a kettle, while Lord Stowe, drawing a penknife from his pocket, proceeded to cut off a thin slice and then to eat it, holding it delicately between his finger and thumb, the penknife in the other hand, the reins loose on the pony's neck.

"A most excellent sausage, upon my word," said Lord Stowe, rolling the portion about his mouth as if he were tasting a sample of port wine. "Strickland, do try a bit. You will, Miss Strickland, at any rate? just to see how well we look after these fine fellows." Lord Stowe I suspect at this moment fancied himself to be quite another Mark Antony, mixing like that popular commander on friendly terms with his troops, or a sort of Charles XII. going the rounds in disguise.

"Gen'lman's so fond of sassaages," replied another man, who was on his knees feeding the fire with sticks, "he'd better 'ave the 'ole biling of 'em, and welcome. Sassaages ain't much good without a mossel of bread to eat 'em with."

"What! do you mean to say you get no bread, my man?" asked Lord Stowe, not knowing quite whether to pursue the jocular style or to appear annoyed.

"Oh yes, we gets a bit o' bread now and agin, and werry good bread it is, when we does get it," said number one; "but we ain't a got any to-

day. You see, it's what they calls the Control Department as does it; they thinks we ought to control of our happeetites."

"Yes, guv'nor," observed number two, "that's where it is, and now you know about the long and short of it."

At this juncture an officer came towards us, whereon the men became silent, and explanations ensued. No notice had been given that the regiment would be encamped out on the flank like this, and so the bread had not come up, and the men were going to dine on their reserve supply of sausage-soup, but it was understood they would receive their proper rations by evening.

"I take leave to mention, Lord Stowe," said Tom Strickland, as we rode away towards the spot where our luncheon-cart was awaiting us, "that this is a militia regiment we have been talking to; these yokels were probably only enrolled a few days before the manœuvres began."

"Well, Strickland," said Lord Stowe, as he sat resting against a low stone wall, with a plate of cold chicken on his lap, and a tumbler of claret-cup on a stone beside him, "I think we may say that the commissariat part of the manœuvres has been as successful as the rest. West here predicted all sorts of failures, but the worst thing that has come before us has been this militia regiment just now, which we found lunching on excellent soup. I must say I think that this amounts to a very decided success."

"They have got about eighteen thousand men out here; we had three months' preparation, and have splendid weather; and with these combined conditions, and with the whole strength and attention of the War Office staff, high and low, to help, we have managed to do the work respectably. This hardly proves much. But that is

not my objection. No one ever supposed that there would be a break-down under such circumstances. If our great department could not manage not to starve this little bit of an army, its incompetence would stand confessed. There would obviously be no room left for argument. My objection is of a different sort. You have literally thrown away the advantage of the manœuvres, so far as this important part of the work goes. You have given the generals their troops to knock about, and so far they and their staff have made use of the opportunity, and have learnt a good deal, no doubt. And this practice is of course a capital thing for our army generally, at least for the very small part of it engaged. But why deliberately throw away one of the most useful parts of the lesson—the art of feeding an army? The troops have been well enough fed, I dare say, although it is only by a sort of miracle that things don't go wrong. But how it is all done is a perfect mystery to the generals. They see the beef and bread go down the men's throats, but where it comes from they don't know and don't care. Yet if we were in a foreign country this would be just the part of their business which would occupy their attention most. You could not work then with bread-and-beef charts, and send down everything by special train from town. The fact is, our generals, as you deal with them, are just like children who are given toys to play with, all packed and ready for use in a box. They enjoy playing with them, but how they are made, and where they come from, they have not the slightest idea."

"But surely," said Mr. Strickland, "it is not to be desired that generals should do these things? Surely their time ought not to be taken up in details of this sort,

when they have to be planning great operations of war?"

"When I say the general should do these things, I mean, of course, his staff acting in his name; but they are kept just as much in the dark as he is about the details of administration. You pick out some of the ablest men in the army for your local controllers, and then give them nothing to do."

But at this point Lord Stowe's attention was diverted by Miss Strickland and Miss Merrifield, with whom he entered into lively conversation, giving them, in politely paternal fashion, a highly lucid account of the day's operations. "The infantry, you see, my dear young ladies, no longer receives the charge of cavalry in squares, as it used to do. At Waterloo, where an uncle of mine served in your brother's regiment, Miss Strickland, the French Cuirassiers over and over again charged our squares, trying to break into them by sheer weight—their cuirasses make them very heavy, you know; but even with this advantage their efforts were of no avail; they were received at the point of the bayonet, and fell by hundreds, transfixed on these deadly weapons."

"Dear me," said Miss Strickland, "I don't think, if I were a foot-soldier, I could help running away in that case. Fancy having a heavy dragoon, or even a light one, coming at you full gallop, to ride you down! I don't think I should be able to stop him if I had ever so sharp a bayonet."

"The bayonet is a very effective weapon," replied Lord Stowe; "I saw a passage of arms at the riding-school of the Bayswater barracks the other day, between a man on foot with a bayonet and a man on horse with a sword, and the first had quite the best of it. But nowadays we trust more to the improved efficiency

of firearms, and the cavalry are not allowed to charge squares, or indeed to show themselves out of cover. There were several mistakes made this morning, by the way, which I noticed, cavalry exposing themselves, and infantry too, where some of them would certainly have been shot if it had been a real battle. All this was of course quite irregular, I am given to understand; still, on the whole, it was an extremely interesting sight. I do so wish Sophia and the rest of my girls could have been here to see it."

"Yas," said (in answer to a query from Tom Strickland) a distinguished officer from one of the South American Republics who had joined the luncheon-party: "Yas, dey are ver fine troops, ver fine, indeed; we do all zay dat. Yas, vat we do zay is dat de infanterie is ver good, de cavalerie is meessrivalled, and de artillerie is superbe. Ah no, dat is not it; it is de infanterie is ver good, de cavalerie vich is superbe, and de artillerie vich is meessrivalled—no, unrifalled, dat is it—de artillerie is unrifalled. So we all say. But, comes it not dat your generals dey do want de—vat we call de *coup d'œil*? are dey not ver old?"

"My dear sir," replied Tom Strickland, "that is part of our deep-reaching policy. You have heard that the Romans used to exercise their troops in extra heavy armour, so that when they came to put on their regular suits they felt quitespry, *extraordinairement agiles*, you understand? Just so with us. If we put on our regular war generals at these manœuvres, the troops would become really too sharp; so a rule has been passed—by Captain West here, or some of his set—that no one shall be qualified to command on such occasions who has not passed at least ten years

en retraite, or who would have the faintest chance of being employed on actual service. Oh no, we keep one set of generals for peace manœuvres, and another in reserve for time of war, who meanwhile are called brigadiers and colonels."

"But dey zay you English do call yourzelves a pragdigal nation?"

"You must not take what this gentleman says seriously," I interrupted; "this is mere ribald jesting on his part."

"I thought," said Mr. Strickland, who had just lighted a cigar, and was reclining next me behind the wall to shelter himself from the wind, which struck cool after the heat of the day,—“I thought this new Control Department was formed for the very purpose of doing on the spot all this work that you speak of? What else is it for, if not to help the general in such business?"

"That is the theory of the thing, no doubt, and as far as size goes the department is big enough to do the work a dozen times over, if it were allowed, and it has been recruited from some of the ablest men in the service. But instead of this, the whole body, so far as I can make out, is regularly kept in leading-strings; all authority is retained in the War Office, and these controllers and assistant-controllers, and the rest of them, with their high-sounding titles and comfortable pay, seem to be without any corresponding power and responsibility. All their business proper, down to the minutest point, is arranged for them by the people in Pall Mall, and these local officials are in fact mere post-offices for transmitting references between the War Office and the army, or agents for distributing the supplies which find their way down by some mysterious agency which they know nothing about."

"But this is as much as to say that people take leave of their common-sense when they enter upon military organization. This seems hardly a reasonable assumption."

"I would not say that exactly. I think the phenomenon of our present defective military administration—and that it is extraordinarily defective is a matter of fact about which no one will have any doubt who inquires into the matter—I think this can be explained without the hypothesis of extreme stupidity. In the first place, the experiment has never really been fairly made. The men who have been put to organise have usually come to the business with no previous knowledge of what is needed, and no distinct apprehension of the principles which lie at the bottom of all sound military administration, and perhaps, too, without having their hearts thoroughly in their work. To have organised our War Department successfully needed the undivided attention and full energies of a first-rate man, with a natural capacity for that sort of work. And that you have never had. At the most critical point of the matter, when, in consequence of the Crimean breakdown, the nation was hot about reform, and when everything depended on the direction given to the course of organisation, you had an abstracted scholar for your War Minister, thrust into the office against his own strong protest, set down to a duty utterly distasteful to him, and for which he had not the smallest natural aptitude. But, in fact, what between the management of their estates, and family interest, and their share in the general political business of the Government, and the time spent in the House, and the distractions of society, many of our public men only give the fag-end of their time and

talents to their proper business of administering their departments. I declare I think it is a wonder rather how the work of some of the big offices gets done at all, than that it should be badly done."

"You have hit on the truth there, I fear. The idleness of some of our public men has been astounding—not more so, however, than the industry of others. You see some men working like galley-slaves, as if their fortunes or their very lives depended on it. And the idlers have usually been the exceptions. But then the system of business in this country is adapted to this state of things—to meet the case, that is, of the heads of departments who live amid the distractions of political life, and can only give a fractional share of their attention to their official duties. Every one knows that the bulk of the business is and must be done by the permanent heads of departments—the Civil Service, in fact."

"No doubt that is so; but then, to make the thing work well, the political head must set a proper system agoing in the first instance. The subordinate officers can't do that, even if they knew how to set about it, which probably none of them do. The British Constitution may require, for example, that your War Minister should know nothing about his business, and have no special aptitude for it; but that is all the more reason why the understrappers should be experts—men who know the weak points of the army organisation from practical acquaintance with it, and are qualified by experience to set about reforming them. In fact, you ought to govern the army through the army. There is plenty of ability available for the purpose if you only got hold of it."

"Yes; but how are you to set about finding it out?"

"I admit it is not plain at first sight what the machinery should be for selecting the right men. You might, of course, if the thing were jobbed, get a lot of mere plungers—men not even good clerks—and nothing else; but we don't even try to get them now. And although civil clerks may be all very well in their way—zealous, and honest, and so forth—still they must be apt to see the army through the refracting miasma of War Office influences, till many of them really seem to think that the army is something which exists merely to give employment to the office. And certainly the present system favours the idea. The result is, that you have a great mass of inertia to overcome before anything can be done; and this can only be got rid of by pressure from above—that is, by a War Minister with a genius for administration. At any rate, our worthy friend sipping his coffee round the corner yonder is hardly the man to apply the lever, even if he had any spare moments not occupied in thinking about his dear Sophia and the rest of the girls in Switzerland."

"Is it not rather a strong fling at the whole body of these officials to describe them as obstructing reform in this manner?"

"I don't think so. For what, after all, do I assert? A man in an office imbibes a suspicion that his functions, and those of a number of the friends about him, are perfunctory and superfluous. What is he to do? In the first place, his conscience will be lulled by the specious argument that, after all, he may very possibly be overscrupulous, for that those whose business it is to take heed about these things, and who ought to be better judges than he is, appear perfectly satisfied

with the arrangements. Further, he sees the perfect futility of action. He is powerless to do any good. He knows perfectly well that if, overborne by a sense of his superfluousness, he were so Quixotic as to resign his post, the only result would be that it would be immediately filled up by somebody else, perhaps some one less competent. Besides, these qualms will only attack the new-comer; in a very short time he will get to believe, with those around him, in the innate fitness of things as he finds them. A man must be strangely independent who will long think differently from the five hundred superiors and equals with whom he is associated."

"But see, all the party are moving off: we must be going too. It seems from what you say that things are in a bad way, and without much chance of their improvement."

"A condition of Parliamentary government I suppose, and to be accepted as such. The Admiralty is of course in the same boat, but there things are perhaps a little better, because there you have a staff of experts to help the first lord, and keep matters straight."

Here our conversation was broken off by the termination of luncheon, and the party began to mount their horses for the ride homewards, Eva and Sybil with Tom Strickland lagging behind, while the latter completed a sketch, which I grieve to say he had had the bad manners to take, furtively, of the distinguished South American officer who had joined us at luncheon, and who certainly, with his tight clothes, high epaulettes shoulders, and dark grinning face surmounted by a cocked-hat, looked not unlike a performing monkey.

THE SESSION OF 1872.

AFTER a last month of exhausting and hurried labour, and of tropical heat, Parliament was at last set free on the 10th of August. From steaming Westminster to the green heather or the pebbly beach, what a delicious change! A truce to gas-light and blue-books, and the hum of bores become intolerable by long-continued iteration. The refreshment and renewal of life which rejoices the rest of nature in spring overtakes the British Legislator about harvest. His spring is a latter spring, his summer All-Hallows. But who knows better than he the value of this reanimation; who more certain to turn the holiday to account according to disposition? Mr. Gladstone, laying his axe to the root of the tree, the ruling principle, destruction, predominating even in his amusements, and senators great and small using the welcome leisure and disporting themselves, are things pleasant to think upon. Never did their relaxation seem to have been more fairly earned than now. Close, incessant application for six weary months, the work of the last month as cruel as the labour of slavery! Yes, let them all, in God's name, know the sweets of repose, and much good may it bring to them! We were about to add that, while they are recruiting, the country at large is realising the value of their work: but we stopped short, unable to discern the great benefits that have resulted, although recognising most fully the amount of travail that has been endured. After all the throes it is hard that we can review scarce anything but a nursery of mice. We make a reservation, though, because two products of the session, the Army Localisation Act and the

Public Health Act deserve to be spoken of as of some importance. But for the rest of the business, it is painful to think how unprofitable it was. Many precious hours, we know, were spent in investigating the illegal practices, and many more in anxious discussion of the blunders, of Her Majesty's Ministers, and many precious weeks in passing measures which had better not have been passed. There was an unreality about the session. The measures before Parliament were not what really occupied the minds of statesmen or of the country; the beatings which Ministers received did not enable them to escape from their difficulties by resignation: the irregularities of which they were convicted did not warrant Parliament to censure them. The beatings—in one case by an adverse majority of a hundred—were pocketed up; the censures though plainly implied were not openly expressed. An influence superior to the subject-matters of debate checked the action of Parliament in regard to Ministers, prevented the beam of the balance from turning, although the greater weight was known to be in the scale opposite to them; and finally, after such a miry passage as men of high mind or feeling could not and would not have endured, brought them to the end of the session placemen still, though miserably damaged. The fact that they remain Ministers to this day is probably due in the first place to the alarm and anxiety which they themselves created by their feeble negotiations with America; and in the second place, to the fortunate interference of the arbitrators. It seems to have been the fate of these negotiations that the mismanagement of

them should bring a certain kind of luck. The President of the Commission had his reward for most discreditable performance of his work, and now the whole Cabinet continue to be a Cabinet because they were incapable of, in the first instance, making a sensible treaty, and afterwards of rectifying their blunders. The stupid supplementary treaty was more faulty than the original treaty, and the proposal to adjourn the arbitration a feeblér resource than the supplementary treaty. The other political events of the session of 1872 are insignificant in comparison with the long and dangerous complication with America: as it ruled the fortunes of the Government throughout, so is it the really important business of the year. True, it has ended as well as its authors ever intended it to end, but no thanks are due to them for that, even if we admit that the end was worth the means used. But it must remain a subject of the gravest doubt whether England may not have lost far more by her undignified bearing in regard to this treaty than she has gained by bringing the dispute with America to arbitration. The advantage, such as it is, can be felt at once, while the loss of her ancient position will come home to England in the future. Having begun a course of yielding and apologising, she must go on. There will be no lack of aspirants ready to make capital out of a nation known to be under the guidance of a recreant Ministry. Our pusillanimity with regard to Russia, encouraged America to be impracticable and high-handed concerning the indirect claims, and our proceedings in both these cases will soon bring some new demand upon us. The American press did not scruple to argue that, as we had yielded to Russia, so should we certainly yield to the United States,

if only they should stand out as Russia did; and other States, we may be sure, will be found ready enough to benefit by these examples. We have apologised to America, and we are about to pay her for acts which, when they were committed, we did not acknowledge to be wrongs. We have given to Canada a guarantee for money, in place of insisting upon a recompense for her injuries such as we are willing to pay for the wrongs charged against us by the United States. It is impossible surely, after such conduct as this, that our character can be high enough to shield us from further demands! Our wealth and the surrender of our treaty rights may, it is true, appease other adversaries and dependencies, as they have appeased Russia and America and Canada; but we cannot forever go on gratifying foreign nations, or making presents to our colonies to buy off our obligation to protect them.

Some of the apologists of Ministers have, we find, given them credit for not having despaired of saving their equivocal treaty, and for having gone on trying one simple device after another rather than give it up. This is very much like complimenting a man who has been drawn out of the water well nigh drowned into a boat, for having clutched at straws during the time of his peril. The Ministry, it is certain, had not wit enough to save itself. It was fortune, their good fortune and ours, which secured the result, such as it was. The arbitrators saved us from the indirect damages. Parliament, we feel assured will discuss the whole matter, now that the award of the arbitrators is known, and perhaps bring some light upon the mysteries of the treaty. The "understanding" concerning the withdrawal of the indirect claims requires to be sifted, and

Ministers ought to be as ready to tell all they know about it as we can be to learn it. For, as we see the case now, it seems very much as if the "understanding" had prearranged not only the withdrawal of the indirect claims but the mulcting of England in a lump sum on account of the direct claims. It was a *misunderstanding* as regards the *time* of withdrawing the indirect claims, inasmuch as our fond commissioners expected that the withdrawal would be before the production of the case, whereas the Americans intended to keep these claims upon the record until the case should be before the arbitrators, and then to withdraw them. But as to the ultimate withdrawal, we can hardly doubt that the "understanding" was the same on both sides. This being so, and the arbitrators having, almost as soon as they were assembled, stepped in to banish the indirect claims from the trial, it befits that we should know whether they were induced through any "understanding" between the parties, to make the award which they have reported. We were told long ago from America that the result would be what we now know that it is. Is it possible that the whole scene at Geneva can have been a farce? Have the eloquent counsel on both sides been only expending their winged words to make people believe that there has been a contest, as Bardolph and his fellows hacked their swords and tickled their noses with spear grass, and bespattered their garments with the blood, for the same purpose? Has the solemn arbitration been a farce? Have the august arbitrators come together with much pomp and ceremony, has much precious time been occupied, and has expense been incurred, simply that an arrangement made two years ago at Washington might now be registered at

Geneva? The country will surely not rest satisfied until questions like the above have been answered.

Had America been equally desirous as ourselves to refer the dispute between us to arbitration, and had the decision been based upon rules that were in existence at the time of the war, we should have paid our fine willingly enough. But it is different as our case stands. We have taken the utmost trouble, we have forgotten what was due to ourselves in bringing this matter to issue; and now the sum which we have to pay is, independently of its amount, a token of humiliation, a sop given to America to buy off her wrath as regards our behaviour during her civil war. It is our first money payment to avert the vengeance of an enemy for innocent acts of ours. Mr. Gladstone's Government enjoys the distinction of having taken the first step in thus dealing with our adversaries. Although we have not acted thus before, other nations have; and their first steps were always followed by other steps of the same kind, and the other steps were followed by ruin. But what resemblance is there, we shall be asked, between the cases of such nations and our case? They undisguisedly gave of their substance, and submitted to humiliation, rather than fight; but look at us. We call in independent and unimpeachable arbitrators and abide by their award: what is there unbecoming in this? Well, we think that the nations who paid in old times the heavy sort of black-mail which we have indicated, didn't do the thing in quite so barefaced and unvarnished a manner as history makes them appear to have done. History gives us the substantial facts clear of all veneering; but there can be no doubt that craven governments, urging for the first time upon a people that had once

been high-spirited and powerful the appeasing of their foes by disgraceful money payments, would wrap up the base acts in some specious coverings to make them tolerable. A loan, perhaps, or an old debt of many centuries' standing, or possibly the very expedient of an arbitrator's award, may have been resorted to. We should like to know how history will record this transaction of ours, when the pill shall be named, and nothing said about the gilding!

But, we are told again, though it is our fate to pay now, see what we have gained. We have established a great rule of international law which will be a hundred times more valuable to England than to any other nation. America's turn will come; she is much more likely to commit Alabama offences than we are; and when she does so, she must submit to arbitration and pay, if it be so decreed. Now, unhappily, we don't derive the least consolation from this consideration. Our belief is that America will submit to arbitration or not, and pay or not, just as she may feel inclined. *We* have chosen to go before arbitrators and to pay, when it was to us that blame was imputed. Reverse the case, and show us what security there is that the dispute so supposed will be similarly dealt with! No: our only satisfaction in the matter proceeds from a different source, to which we have alluded before—namely, that the Americans as a people are less disposed now than formerly to misjudge our acts, and to think ill of us. Hence quarrels may not from slight causes occur. If we can remain at peace, or, better, if we can establish a real amity, with America, that will undoubtedly be a subject of congratulation; but it is a thing altogether beside the squabble about the Alabama, and the reputation which we shall bear

in the world after the bungling treaty and the damaging payment. Unwilling as we may be to acknowledge that we have been altogether misled in this matter, there is every reason to fear that we may be made to feel that such is the case. A weekly contemporary has said—and, we fear, with too much reason—“The conscientious aversion to war, which really determines English policy is by all foreign communities attributed to cowardice.” Now we know very well that the nation, although it has allowed itself to be befooled into an undignified position with regard to America, will never submit to be treated as a nation of cowards. It will wipe off the stain that Mr. Gladstone's Government has brought on it. And so we leave this matter for the present.

Of the laws which have been passed, the Ballot Act occupied the most time, the amount of discussion being in proportion to the dislike and apprehension which it excited in all quarters. We remarked at length upon the singular birth of this statute two months ago, and do not mean now to resume the subject, which is more curious than anything in the experience of Dr. Slop and his green bag. We do, however, in answer to many Conservatives who have lost heart at seeing the House of Lords consent to a Bill of which they do not approve, say again that we think the Lords acted wisely. It would have been clearly worse than useless to reject the measure; and besides the irritation to which such rejection would probably have given rise, another evil consequence was to be apprehended. There is but too much reason to fear that many members of the other House supported the Ballot against their inclination, but relying upon the obstinacy of the Lords to assume the responsibility and the odium which they themselves would have

incurred if they had done their duty. Now, it was as well to disappoint such an expectation as that, and to let weak members of the House of Commons understand that they must do their duty themselves if they wish it done. Whatever the peers may have suspected, they were right in assuming that the Bill, which had a second time been sent up to them, was freely passed by a majority of the Commons. They had, by their postponement of it in 1871, gained for the country a year of reflection. The country neither condemned the Bill nor expressed such doubt of the general feeling towards it, as would have made an election desirable, and therefore the Lords having fulfilled their duties in respect of it, would have been wrong to cause a further delay, which might have been resented as mere obstruction. It is taking but a mean view of the position and duties of the House of Lords to suppose that they are doggedly to oppose every change that their wisdom and experience may condemn, if, after due time given for consideration, the body of the country cannot be brought to endorse their views. Such opposition would but bring the Upper House into contempt, without serving the purpose which the disheartened Conservatives wish well to.

The Licensing Bill, the fate of which was doubtful for a long time, has at last become law. It furnishes an example of how much restriction and inconvenience temperate and harmless people are willing to submit to in order that they may limit the opportunities of the weak and vicious to be guilty of excess. We shall be glad to find that this measure achieves its object, but cannot say that we have much hope of its doing so. If the law's direct dealing with a drunkard—i. e., if the infliction of a fine for drunken-

ness cannot repress the vice, we can hardly hope to repress it by making its indulgence a little more difficult. Sometimes difficulty gives a zest to wrong-doing. The real power and stronghold of drunkenness and tipping we believe to reside not so much in our people's general love of ardent liquors, as in the opinion that the presence and consumption of these liquors is necessary in order that there may be good-fellowship, or the practice of hospitality, or the healing of animosities, or due demonstration of joy. In this opinion the lower classes are taught and confirmed by the upper, who, although they no longer as of old set the example of feasting to excess, yet do certainly use to many occasions of making expensive feasts, and of furnishing them with an excessive quantity and variety of intoxicating liquors. Suppose that, instead of imposing, or let us say in addition to imposing, hardships upon travellers and quiet citizens for the sake of the intemperate and improvident, we were to be a little less fond of public feasts; and suppose that in both public and private feasts we were to be a little less profuse in our consumption of wines and spirits: we should be far more likely to repress the fashion of drinking upon all occasions than by fulminating any number of prohibitory edicts, and possibly our philanthropic endeavours, instead of being inconvenient to ourselves, might prove agreeable and salutary.

Mr. Lowe's surplus must have been hailed as a great deliverance. Had that not enabled him to make a remission of income-tax, the unstable Ministry must have given way, for the temper of the House of Commons was such that a continued pressure upon our means would have been resented. The reduction of the tax was but sulkily received. But, if Mr. Lowe did not obtain the

meed of thanks or approbation, Mr. Cardwell profited by the lightening of the impost; for we may assume, after the trouble which it cost him to get his Localisation Act through, that he would altogether have failed if the Chancellor of the Exchequer's demand had been more galling. As it turned out, Mr. Cardwell is the only Minister who has this year achieved anything like success; and it is worthy of remark, that this solitary success attended measures which were decidedly at variance with the principles upon which Mr. Gladstone's Ministry took office. A decreased military expenditure, and an indifference to anything so wicked as war, even as a war of defence, the "silver streak" policy in fact, were what were in favour four years ago when Mr. Bright's help was essential. But, when the country insisted upon being secured against aggression, the cries of 1868 were forgotten, and the old "Happy England" extravagances unblushingly abandoned. So far is defence from being neglected, that the organisation of the forces has been decidedly the measure of the session; so little has economy been regarded, that, notwithstanding the written decree of Mr. Bright himself, the provision for the expenditure of the year has been raised to above seventy millions, and we have had our debt increased besides. Mr. Bright said that he could not countenance any Government that could act in this way; and yet we think we remember his stating this summer, and after the estimates were before Parliament, that he approved the proceedings of the Ministry. It would have been an ungracious thing, certainly, for him to have openly censured his late colleagues when he found that they would no longer listen to his warnings, but he might have preserved his consistency and held his

tongue. Possibly he has reflected by this time, that although Mr. Gladstone submits tamely enough to a vigorous schoolmaster who keeps him tightly in check, yet that he becomes wilful as soon as he is out of reach of the rod. We should have been glad if the House of Commons, while favouring Mr. Cardwell's measure, had been a little more severe upon the abandonment of the old "efficiency with economy" delusion. At any rate we are glad to witness in Parliament a genuine desire to make the army efficient; and we think that Mr. Cardwell's scheme is in many respects calculated to benefit the army and the country too, although we should have been better satisfied if some assurance had been given us that there were means of obviating the objections which must present themselves to even a superficial thinker on the subject. That the soldier will be more readily procured under the new system than of old; that he will be better exercised and quartered; that his social condition will be vastly improved,—we do not at all doubt. But we should like to know how it is proposed to keep the soldier the mere servant of the State, unaffected by local politics and local passions, when his home service with the colours, and his life while he belongs to the reserve, will be passed all in one place, that being probably the place of his birth. Every regiment will henceforth be thoroughly saturated with the opinions and feelings of its district in regard to public questions, and will certainly deserve high credit for its discipline if, in case of disturbances, it should be found devoted to duty, and ready before all things to preserve the peace. The native regiments might be ordered away, and corps from another county introduced, if excitement should arise in a district; but while the exchange

would be taking place, precious time would be lost and much mischief might happen. Besides, an order to move, after moving shall be out of fashion, would betray the design of the Government, and possibly provoke indignation and opposition (for soldiers are but beings of flesh and blood), which would be very awkward at such a time. To march in a strange regiment without removing the native one would be very like commencing a civil war. It is not fair, even to a British soldier, who, as we know, can be as true and loyal as any being in the world, to subject him all his days to the influences of one district—to let him become familiar with the agitators, the grievances, the animosities, and the prejudices of the place—and then to expect him to turn out cool and indifferent at a time when passion is at its height, and forget that he is anything but the servant of the State. We fear, too, that when the regiments shall be settled down each in its own corner, which it will never leave except to proceed on foreign service, the fraternity of the profession must suffer, and that it will be difficult to keep up the same military feeling as when regiments were constantly meeting and relieving each other. Moreover, we have heard no means stated by which it is proposed to enforce the immediate attachment of the reserves to the colours whenever they may be required. These, surely, are points too important to be left to the shaping of time; and Parliament ought to have insisted on being satisfied in regard to them before it sanctioned the expenditure for establishing the local centres. We quite expect to see the service become popular; but simply to make it popular is not the whole of the problem before the authorities; and we should like to be assured that they are not, in their eagerness to

fill the ranks and complete the reserves, losing sight of the essential properties—Discipline and General Efficiency. The Localisation Act was not half discussed. We frequently drew attention to the inexpediency of postponing it to the very end of the session, and our apprehensions have been realised, inasmuch as it has become law without the necessary guarantees having been exacted, that it can be carried out without prejudice to the discipline and utility of the army. It is very well to call Mr. Cardwell's a comprehensive scheme, but then a scheme may be a great deal too comprehensive for safety. The abolition of purchase is a change sufficiently trying to the service, and yet along with it we are to have a radical alteration of the system of moving and quartering troops. We observe that, though no thought was given to the discipline of the army in the passage of the Act, the comparative morality of the soldier has been keenly discussed. It is a highly edifying subject, and might be set for a prize essay, to exercise the strong-minded fair who give so much attention to subjects of the kind. Opinions for or against the soldier's character will scarcely be affected by the investigation; but it will be well to have a philosophical verdict, and to find some pabulum for these delicate inquirers now that contagion is pretty well exhausted. For our own part, we don't mean to take a side in the controversy, not deeming the solution of the question to be practically important. On grounds quite independent of morality it has been decided that we must have soldiers. It follows that they must be quartered somewhere, and whether that somewhere mean the new centres, or the old barracks in the towns, cannot signify much to morals.

The Public Health Bill, insuffi-

cient as it is, was worth enacting, if only as a recognition that the public health must henceforth be a care of Parliament. Some good results from it will, without doubt, be speedily realised, and in time we shall get a well-digested sanitary code. This and the Mines Acts (which latter were certainly much called for) bring us to the end of profitable work of the session. Yet some of the negations deserve mention as having shown a right feeling in Parliament. Extreme radicalism, as we learn from Mr. Baxter, is as yet somewhat in advance of Mr. Gladstone's convictions; that is, the instinct of self-preservation counsels Ministers to discountenance it for the present. Accordingly an attack on real property was summarily disposed of; an assiduous attempt to undermine the Established Church was exposed and baffled; a Dissenters' plot to stifle education altogether, because the clergy of the Establishment are by far its most energetic promoters, found no encouragement in the House, and even roused the protest of some more conscientious Dissenters out of doors; and the intrusive Burials Bill, after living through a second reading, suddenly was not, for honourable members repented of their rashness and arranged its accidental death.

The Lord Chancellor broke down in an attempt at Law Reform, and, after being mercilessly criticised by Lord Cairns, assisted in the immolation of his own unlucky bantling. An Emancipation Bill to open the offices of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and Lord Chancellor of England to Roman Catholics was also overlaid by its author. Our old acquaintance the Deceased Wife's Sister had rather worse luck than usual. And Women's Disabilities, championed by Mr. Jacob Bright, were most unchivalrously refused redress by the House of Commons.

The omission to discuss our late naval disasters was injurious. The *Megæra* scandal (which the 'Times' in its account of *the session* confuses with the stranding of the *Agincourt*, saying that Mr. Göschen "afterwards visited with severe censure the officers whose neglect had caused the disaster") received scarcely any notice; and "the officers whose neglect had caused the disaster" are still, to our shame, unvisited by any censure except that of opinion, which they don't care for. The evil of postponing an expression of censure is evident from the obfuscation which has come over the 'Times.' No doubt, Ministers desire that the recollection of the public should be equally indistinct. So we will just observe, by way of reminder, that what happened to the *Megæra* was that she, after being known to be unseaworthy, and after having been, as such, placed at the bottom of the list of transports, was ordered from England to Australia—i. e., to make her way first to the Cape of Good Hope and thence across the great Indian Ocean to New South Wales—some of her iron plates being worn to the thinness of an eggshell. She got safely to the Cape, but, in attempting to cross the Indian Ocean, sprang a leak, which obliged her to make for the island of St. Paul, where it was necessary to run her on shore, and where, after by great good management her officers and crew and great part of her stores had been landed, she went to pieces. The officers who went in her were sinned against, not sinning, and deserved nothing but praise for their energy and foresight, and for preventing greater disasters than actually happened. Those who really deserved blame have yet to come up for judgment, and we most heartily wish that they may not be allowed to escape.

In the very last days of the sea

sion, and since the publication of our last number, some of the Irish members had the audacity to resume the debate on the Keogh judgment, and to make another desperate attempt to carry the war into the enemy's camp by inviting Parliament to censure the learned judge. Of course the attempt was unsuccessful; but, as an example of the blindness of Irish tacticians, it has been imprinted on the minds of Parliament and of the country. What-ever absence of good taste the wording of the judgment may exhibit,—and we admit that it is characterised by a want of good taste,—the temptation to expose the judge's infirmity of style should never have betrayed the Irish orators into such a damaging course as that of forcing public attention to the details of the judgment. Grant that the judge's rambling, flowery, ambitious composition may thus be held up to literary reproach or ridicule, is that a sufficient inducement for calling attention on this side of St. George's Channel to the infamous practices of priestcraft which the judge's paragraphs have brought to light? Surely, if common sense had been consulted, its dictates would have recommended leaving the English and Scotch peoples informed of only the outlines of this damaging business as they have been sketched by a thousand pens in the newspapers; then, perhaps, we, on this island, might have remained under the delusion that the bishops and clergy who had violated the law in the county Galway were persons of such character and respectability as we habitually ascribe to bishops and clergymen; then we might have still retained some reverence and respect for the churchmen whose zeal had led them to commit themselves, notwithstanding that we should have condemned their transgression of the law. But by carping at the

details of the judgment, the Irish members have driven us to examine those details; and what a picture do we there find of the Roman Catholic prelates and clergy! Can we respect them any more, after reading those details? Perhaps, before that question is answered, we had better look a little into the case to which public notice was so pertinaciously drawn by the Irish members.

The broadest fact presented to us by the evidence is, that the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Tuam, and a portion of his clergy who had jurisdiction within the county Galway, assumed from the first, as if it were a matter of course, that it rested with them to send a member to the Imperial Parliament when, lately, a seat for that county was vacant. There is not the least reason for believing that this was any new or exceptional assumption; on the contrary, everything indicated that the claim virtually to elect, and the practice of virtually electing in accordance with that claim, had been long established and were well known. Captain Nolan's proceeding when he first became a candidate for the vacant seat was to address—whom? the electors? No; we shall see directly what part the electors had to play in sending to Parliament a knight of the shire! Captain Nolan did not waste any word on the electors; he applied to the person who had, or flattered himself that he had, the seat in his gift; he applied to the Archbishop of Tuam. For reasons, some real and some pretended, and of which we shall have more to say anon, the Archbishop accepted Captain Nolan, and immediately set in motion the machinery necessary for securing his formal election. This machinery was a purely clerical organisation. Although it had been known during nearly the whole of the year 1871 that an election was impending, and

although the clergy were in motion early in August of that year, and the Archbishop had been pledged some time before that, it is the fact that up to the middle of December no lay elector had been asked for his vote or consulted on the subject of the election. The words of the judgment are, "Up to this time [13th December] not a single lay freeholder, frieze-coated or broadclothed, was consulted. . . . The lay element, I say, is as completely out of this case on the 16th November as if it did not exist." The Archbishop by bargain assigned the seat to Captain Nolan in the summer: meetings of the clergy were then at different times held in order that every bishop and priest, whose interest and co-operation were required, might be unmistakably committed to do the will of the Archbishop; and, when all the clergy was instructed, the seat was considered to be as much Captain Nolan's as anything of the future could be. That was Captain Nolan's belief;* that was the belief of the Archbishop, bishops, and clergy; and that was the truth so far as the first return was concerned. The Archbishop conferred the seat; his clergy were required to make good his appointment: and as for the laity—the electors—well, we will

anticipate a little and say what the part of the electors who supported Captain Nolan was in this election; they "were the mindless, brainless, coward instruments in the hands of ecclesiastical despotism." (Judgment, p. 50.)

Now, we say nothing, so far, of the means by which the Archbishop and clergy made good their promise of the seat to Captain Nolan. We say nothing as to whether the conduct of the clerical body, or of individuals, was legal, honourable, or becoming: we merely note the fact that an archbishop, and a portion of his bishops and clergy, took into their own hands a Parliamentary election; and that, from the business-like way in which they managed it, and from the incidents of the election as described in the evidence given before the judge, no one can doubt that they have habitually controlled and managed elections previous to this. And we ask whether this is a function which pertains to ministers of the Church of God; what would be thought and said of Protestant prelates and clergymen who should devote themselves to such work; and whether the body of the English and Scotch electors knew before this (individuals, of course, knew it) whose delegates and mouthpieces they have

* "Mr. Sebastian Nolan, . . . who declared early in November (on the 4th, or perhaps the 5th, but certainly early in November), to Mr. Peter Blake, of Crumlin, a magistrate of this county, and a Protestant gentleman, that 'his brother's election was now perfectly safe, as Dr. Duggan had been appointed Bishop of Clonsfert, a district of which they were not very sure before:' that his brother now had all the game in his own hands. Let the castles do what they like! we have got the bishops! He used those very words: '*That his brother now had all the bishops*;' that Dr. M'Hale would propose him; that he had two of the best agents in every parish, the parish priest and his curate; that the bishops and priests' (mind this is the language that Mr. Blake has laid to the door of Mr. Sebastian Nolan) 'would speak a few Sundays before the election to their flocks, and that the people would all vote whatever way the bishops and priests told them. That they would have mobs here and mobs there, and that it would be hard to work against that; and, finally, that by those means his brother was certain of one thousand majority. If I wanted anything on the face of the living earth to satisfy me upon the subject of this inquiry, its birth, its youth, its manhood, its maturity, its decrepitude, it is furnished to me by that conversation of Mr. Sebastian Nolan, on the unquestioned and unquestionable evidence of Mr. Peter Blake."—Mr. Justice Keogh's judgment (Parliamentary Paper), p. 11.

been who have sat in the Imperial Parliament under colour of being the representatives of many Irish counties and towns?

But the fact of clergymen having conspired to usurp the rights of electors, and occupied themselves with the miserable practices of electioneering, though a sufficiently disgraceful fact, is made to take but a secondary place when we come to view the means to which these clergymen resorted for the accomplishment of their object. That object could be accomplished only through the votes of a majority of the electors, and to compel those votes the priesthood did not scruple to use intimidation of a most revolting and infamous kind. It is a doctrine of their Church that they possess the means of excluding the souls of men from happiness hereafter; and, by threatening to exercise this power, and in some cases by using the visible means which according to their teaching give effect to the power—*i.e.*, by withholding the sacraments and offices of their Church—they are enabled to coerce the people, or if any should be bold enough to resist the spiritual dictation, then to pursue them with temporal penalties to be inflicted by their fellow-men. This power they freely used to carry the county Galway election. They let it be known that any man voting, except according to the will of the priests, would imperil his salvation; and they also denounced from the altar, as objects of temporal vengeance, those who should dare to support any but the priest-chosen candidate—in some instances denouncing men by name. Moreover, it came out in one instance that a priest regarded the confessional as a convenient means of discovering how electors used their votes, in order that punishment might follow every vote unauthorised by the clergy. The evidence
gives with instances of this atro-

cious pressure; it is impossible to enumerate them here, but some few of them may be given as examples.

The Bishop of Clonfert, on the first Sunday after his consecration, preached a sermon in Ballinasloe on this election; and it is sworn that in the sermon "the Bishop stated that 'anathema' would be hurled against all who would not do as he and the clergy said." And it appears that a voter who had dared to support Captain Trench was immediately removed from the choir, and his little children were turned out of the convent at Ballinasloe. To one congregation the priest is charged by three witnesses with having said, "If the agents of Trench come among you, hunt them from you like devils. Better for those who have horses that the horses should have their legs cut from under them than that they should hire them to Trench." He would "brand them as traitors for ten generations if they did anything for Trench." He said that "one who was hiring cars for Captain Trench has the impertinence to talk of the Gospel;" on which the judge remarks, "What was the impertinence? That this poor fellow knew a great deal better than any of his priesthood that the altar of God was not the place for unseemly exhibitions of this kind, but that its true work was the explanation of the Gospel." Another priest is charged with having said that "any one who would vote for Trench would go down to their graves with the brand of Cain on them and their children after them;" and with having cursed in Irish a lady by name. A priest at the altar said, "Any one who voted for Captain Trench it would be remembered to him—I say remembered to him!" and he stamped his foot; and another priest said, that "any voter would have to account in the other world." At

Ballygar the clergyman is proved to have said of any who should vote for Trench, "that he would point his finger at him to be a black sheep amongst the flock; and he told them all to come round and put down their names in the vestry." Two of Lord Gough's tenants stated that their priest would not give them absolution or the rites of the Church unless they voted for Captain Nolan. Captain Nolan (said one of the clerical agents) was the choice of the bishop and priests, and any one who did not vote for him would be a renegade. An "insane disgrace to the Roman Catholic religion," as the judge called him, "said they would use the confessional" (which it is the first cardinal doctrine of a Roman Catholic's faith to believe to be as closed to the exterior air as ever was the inner temple of the Delphic oracle, or the Holy of Holies in the Temple of Jerusalem) "under the ballot, if they required it!" and the same "insane disgrace" said from the altar in his vestments before the last Gospel, "That all his parishioners, freeholders, were bound to vote for Captain Nolan, as it was a matter of religion; and that even if they had previously promised their landlords, they were bound to break their promise and vote with him." On which the judge remarks that the Archbishop of Tuam, in reference to this same election, had said that it was the first principle of ethical morals to keep a promise, and asks if there is to be one moral law for an archbishop and another moral law for the county of Galway. A priest figures as saying "that any other person, except Lord Clancarty's own tenants, who voted for Captain Trench, he would not say mass for in his house during his life." "Our renegade Catholics will be excoriated," says another pillar of the Church; and, says

another pillar, "Captain Nolan was the choice and wish of the bishops and priests; no good Catholic would vote for Captain Trench, and those who did so were wolves in sheep's clothing, and should not be recognised by their fellow-Catholics." Then there is the oft-cited saying of the priest, that Sir Thomas Burke had "sounded his death-knell." It is unnecessary as it is revolting to quote more of these dreadful profanations; but we must call attention to the fact that the whole body of churchmen appear to have quite given themselves up to the business of this election, and that the very standing ordinances for the performance of divine service were violated or made to give way in order that there might be full opportunity for intimidating the electors; also that the clergy in the town of Tuam marched with their followers to the poll under banners emblazoned with mitres, and stamped with the mottoes, "Galway and God," "Nolan and God." Of course we cannot trace the consequences, as regarded the voting, of all this intimidation, because it operated chiefly on religious terrors; but even the temporal dangers which it aroused were not trifling, as an instance or two may serve to show. Lord Delvin, the son of Lord Westmeath, had to absent himself from chapel, and was afraid to allow his little children outside his demesne. Mr. Sebastian Nolan said, "There will be mobs here and mobs there; they will come from the neighbouring counties, and the gentry will be afraid to go outside their demesne." A voter said that he would be started like a hare from the chapel door. Sir Arthur Guinness and his tenants, in fighting their way to the poll, "had literally to renew the dangers of the Khyber Pass." Sir Arthur was himself severely cut in the head, and several of his men

were badly wounded. Their cry was, "Master, we will be murdered." Mr. Seward, a county gentleman, had been so foully used, that he resolved to sell his property and quit the country. Two magistrates are literally placed in peril of their lives at Kinvarra, the mob shouting, "Come out here, you dogs; we will have your life!" The magistrates were both Roman Catholics, and the mob were primed with drink, by order of the parish priest. A Catholic gentleman says, "I was started like a hare, and I got, with the peril of my life, through the streets of Tuam." A reverend gentleman swore that he thought the summons-server one man in a thousand to dare to come to serve a priest with a process of court. A Catholic gentleman, a witness, declares that "he never saw such excitement; the farmers were terribly affected, as well they might be, by the resolutions at the meetings." One of this gentleman's tenants wrote to him—"Mercy I know I will have from you, but there is no mercy elsewhere." And another tenant said that he would do much for his old friend and landlord, but he could not go against the mob and the priest. A man and his wife were refused confession because the man would not promise to vote for Nolan. And so the infernal persecution went on; so that the judge, after hearing and sifting the evidence, was led to say:—

"All this establishes to my mind the foregone conclusion on the part of the Archbishop, his suffragan bishops, and the great portion, if not the whole, of the parish priests and curates who have been named in evidence, to strain every point, to move every engine, to use every influence, to dispense with every one of those ordinances of the Church, to accomplish their object. That object I solemnly believe to have

been, whether so intended or not, the overthrow of all free will and civil liberty in this portion of Ireland."

In another place the judge, speaking of the case in general, calls it "the most astounding attempt at ecclesiastical tyranny which the whole history of priestly intolerance presents."

We see, then, to what purposes the Catholic Church in Ireland devotes itself, and we see the means by which it strives to attain them. But shocking as are these ends and means, we have looked at the conspirators and agents as an organised body only, collectively responsible for the enormities that have been brought to light. The judgment, however, shows us more than this. It reveals not only the practices of the Church, but it gives an insight into the characters of some of the individuals of whom the priesthood of that Church is composed, calculated, we think, to make a deep impression upon North and South Britons. The maxim that where the fruit is corrupt, the tree must be corrupt, seems to be powerfully exemplified in the Galway election. The work of the Church is done by persons in every way qualified to do it. Let us see if such be not the case.

One of the first acts of the Archbishop, after he had determined to bestow the seat upon Captain Nolan, was to write a letter to the 'Free-man's Journal' announcing the choice which he had made. That letter contains the following passage: "Captain Nolan has earned fresh claims to the support of the tenant class, and, as it seems, to the enmity of the landlords, by his noble conduct in atoning, by large pecuniary sacrifices, for some acts of landlord severity inflicted in his neighbourhood, which might be traced, as often happens, to the cupidity of

evil counsellors rather than his own." This statement coming from such a quarter we may assume to have been received as very high testimony in favour of Captain Nolan. It no doubt helped to make the Archbishop's commands palatable to the electors; and had there been no petition it might have remained to this day a memorial of the great desert of him on whom had fallen the choice of the free and independent electors of the county Galway. But unfortunately there is an inquiry before Mr. Justice Keogh, who feels it his duty to announce that not one single sixpence has been proved to have been paid or sacrificed by the gallant Captain; and that there is not one particle of foundation for the passage which attributes the conduct of Captain Nolan to the cupidity of interested counsellors. The Parliamentary style of characterising this conduct would be to say that the Archbishop was greatly mistaken; just as we might, in Parliamentary phrase, say of another personage, not an Archbishop, that he was mistaken from the beginning or that he is a mistake, and the father of it. But we don't care for Parliamentary glosses in so grave a matter as this; and if we may not use plain English on the occasion, will leave it to our readers to apply the right term to this mistake of the Archbishop of Tuam.

The judge had occasion to put a question to the bishop of Clonfert regarding the Canons of the Council of Trent; whereupon the Bishop informed him that he had been employed in missionary labours, and knew nothing about the Canons. "He left the impression upon my mind," says the judge, "that if ever he knew anything of those Canons he had entirely forgotten them." Clearly this excellent Bishop possesses, as was shown at

the inquiry, qualifications which are far more useful than a knowledge of the Canons. Then there is a priest named Conway, of whom the judge is obliged to say that he is *splendide mendax*, and whom he accuses of having "poured a flood of abuse too filthy to be repeated." The following passage refers to Father Loftus, whom the judge called "a wretch;"—"What must I think of Mr. Loftus after that? First, for his having dared to introduce the subject as he did; and afterwards, as a minister of religion, having sworn in this court of justice, in the most solemn manner, that he never used a word of the kind. Mr. Hunt . . . is called by Mr. Loftus as a witness to vamp up, as I say, *the debauched evidence of that dreadful priest*. There is nearly every word proved out of his own mouth and the mouths of his own witnesses!" But Mr. Loftus is not without worthy *confrères* who keep him in countenance. Take, for instance, the reverend Mr. Staunton, of whom it was said, that "he admits that he told Pat Kinneen that 'there were two ways of telling the truth.' When he came on this table to answer on his oath, the spectacle was awful and disgusting, and I believe there were people in this court of high position and great authority who screened their very faces not to see the man while he was making such an exhibition of himself. He admits that he suggested to Kinneen to 'polish' his evidence for Mr. Concannon; by which he said he meant that 'a man could either add to or diminish what was the real fact.'"

Having thus taken a short survey of the kind of work on which, in Ireland, a Roman Catholic archbishop, with his bishops and priests, think proper to employ themselves, of the means by which they work, and of the individual characters of

some of the workers, we need no longer fear that any of our readers will judge of the priesthood of the electioneering religion by the clergy with whom he himself is familiar. There will no longer be such confusion of ideas, nor any desire but that the clergy who have committed themselves as demonstrated in the evidence and judgment should obtain their reward at the hands of the law.

But there is another matter of which we hope that men will be led by this trial and judgment to think. Mr. Gladstone pulled down the Irish branch of the Protestant Church to gratify the Roman Catholic clergy. He could not have done so if the people of England and Scotland had not assisted him. What do they think of their work after informing themselves of what came out on the Galway petition? Are the priests who figure in that case persons whom any right-minded man would desire to indulge? Some thirty years since the virtuous indignation of the late Daniel O'Connell was set boiling by the application of the expression "surpliced ruffians" to the Irish Catholic priests. We do not know whether the priests of those days closely resembled the priests of to-day or not, but the language of those days is certainly suggested by a perusal of the evidence taken before Mr. Justice Keogh at Galway. The verdict as to what the Galway priests deserve must be unanimous and universal: the mere idea of tolerating such a disgrace to religion and civilisation is revolting. And yet, let us think what we were doing only a year or two since. We were weakening and mutilating our own Protestant Church, and disestablishing and disendowing our own clergy, solely for the purpose of soothing and propitiating such people as Archbishop M'Hale and his priests. The plausible argument for the sacrifice

of course was,—“No, we are not doing it for the sake of the priests; it is to conciliate the Catholic people in Ireland that we are doing it.” The Catholic people! The Galway inquiry shows us what the Catholic people are—poor wretches, whose souls and bodies are in thralldom to the priests. Surely, after what we have just learned, it is idle to suppose that we can get at the hearts or the reason, or influence the actions, of the Irish people where they are Papists. No: the priest is the people; and the vaunted Irish Acts of Mr. Gladstone's Government have simply been sopas to these priests. We are overcome with a holy horror when sometimes an official in our colonies and dependencies, to propitiate the natives, pays some harmless compliment to their religion; but what Pagan medicine-men, or fetish-folk, or magicians, can be more abominable, or act more in opposition to Christianity, than this base, shameless clergy before whom our Ministers and our Parliament have been bowing themselves, and grovelling in utter abasement? Although the Ministers knew what they were doing, the people did not. It is for the people, now that they are informed, to vindicate their own dignity and consistency. They have no right to be horrified by Mumbo Jumbo as long as they sacrifice to Archbishop M'Hale and his cursing priests. The next time a statesman in want of office begins to mouth about justice to Ireland, let us look back to the Galway election in 1872. It is just possible that this fuss which the priests through their mouthpieces have been making in the House of Commons may have been made to the overthrow of themselves and their unholy power.

Until some investigation suddenly startles us by bringing their machinations to light, we are left ignorant of the point of arrogance

to which, by favour of a servile Government, and by terrorism exerted right and left, the priests have advanced their pretensions. If there be any body of men superior to truckling to Romish influence, or unlikely knowingly to allow themselves to be bullied or dictated to, it is the National Educational Commission of Ireland. Including, as it does, some of the most independent and most highly educated men in the land, we cannot suspect for a moment that it would ever be consciously guilty of an act of subservience. But we know that Governments, imperial as well as local, have not hesitated to cringe to the encroaching power of Rome, which, using shrewdly the devotion of its parasites, so extends its influence that men and institutions are circumvented silently and secretly—sucked into a whirlpool in which they do not know themselves to be engulfed, because everybody and everything else revolves with them—and made by custom and iteration to bow to a policy which, if it were to present itself openly, they would despise and defy. When the O'Keefe case was brought before Parliament, it must have astonished the Education Commissioners as much as it did the House of Commons to find how quietly the former body had fallen into the habit of acting under the orders of Rome. A parish priest, who was also a manager of five national schools, was suspended by Cardinal Cullen from the exercise of his ecclesiastical functions, but appealed to a court of law against the suspension. As soon as the decree of suspension had been issued, the Romish Bishop of Ossory requested the Education Commissioners to remove the priest (Mr. O'Keefe) from the management of the five schools; and this the Commissioners did without hearing

O'Keefe, or waiting to know how the law court would regard his case. When brought to a sense of what they had done, the Commissioners could only make such an excuse as was discreditable to themselves, and showed to what a habit of submission they had descended. They said that they had punished Mr. O'Keefe unheard, at the call of the Bishop, because they had been in the habit of acting in all matters affecting the *status* of clerical managers through the recognised heads of the denominations to which they belonged. Accordingly, when his ecclesiastical superiors desire to trounce Father O'Keefe (who does not appear to have had his conduct in regard to school management in the slightest degree impugned) they not only take away his benefice, but deprive him of his school management too, through the agency of the Commissioners, who allow themselves tamely to be made the tools of Romish tyranny. As soon as the attention of Parliament is called to this injustice, everybody perceives that it is an injustice, and the Marquis of Hartington thinks that the Commissioners acted too hastily. Mr. Gladstone is very eloquent to show that, notwithstanding their hasty action, it would be unwise to visit the Commissioners with censure. We admit that there would have been no good done by censuring the Commissioners, who seem merely to have been carried away by the stream that sweeps along everything Irish, and to have had no intention of acting unfairly. The censure should be for those who have sold us to Rome, who, as the price of the votes of the priests' delegates, elected as we have seen, make over the virtual direction of Irish affairs great and small to this arrogant Church. Every exposure of this kind, however, is very threatening to any compact which may

exist between the contemptible Ministry and the wicked priests. A knowledge on this side the Channel of the character and deeds of these priests is all that is wanted to make the bargain innocuous to any but the parties to it. The enormities which have been already brought to light will, let us hope, lead to further inquiry and increased watchfulness. Every fresh transgression, after being officially sifted, should be submitted to the special notice of the public, who, once awakened to the state of things in Ireland, will scarcely allow any plotting. It is also not beyond possibility that the true character of Mr. Gladstone's Irish policy may, through these impudent moves of priestcraft, come to be generally understood and resented. The retribution which would follow might be expected to be sharp, and it would certainly be righteous. The Irish Church may yet be avenged on the conspirators who destroyed her.

It would have been very incorrect to say at the end of the late tedious session that anything good, or wholesomely interesting, had been kept until now; yet it is certainly true that, to the last, Parliament found plenty of matter to wrangle over; that its terminal energy seemed almost equal to its initial fire; and that the combatants were so far from being satiated with strife, that they had to be torn asunder, as it were, by the usher of the black rod, although the subjects of debate proved the pugnacity to be morbid. We have already noted the wild anxiety of the priests' representatives to expose the proceedings of their clergy; and we must now refer to Mr. Ayrton's amenities as another stimulus, which, like brandy poured down the throat of an exhausted patient, caused a light to flicker over the visage of the jaded House of Commons, and "fired its glazing eye." Mr.

Ayrton having, according to the earlier or later experience of most bullies, caught a Tartar, as the saying is, a debate on his discomfiture served as a little devilled caviare after the real feast was over. It is evident, from the tone of Mr. Ayrton's defence, that he is to this hour under the impression that he has been spitefully and unreasonably attacked, and that a tremendous fuss has been made about what seems to him a mole-hill; while his memory and conscience tell him that there are, quietly mouldering away in pigeon-holes, mountains upon mountains which never caused a moment's trouble. If everything about these mountains was so regular and unassailable that they could not be called in question, *à fortiori* was it factious and obstructive to worry him about the molehill. Mr. Ayrton's complaint was so far colourable that the records not only of his but of any Government office might doubtless be made to show fifty times worse treatment than ever Dr. Hooker had to put up with. Defiant injustice; indifference to pitiful and righteous remonstrance; insulting, lacerating language; scornful neglects,—these and a hundred other hardly tolerable wrongs have to be endured more commonly than the uninitiated would suppose by poor wretches who cannot or dare not remonstrate, and whose appeal would probably lead to ruin.

"The insolence of office and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy
takes,"

are grievances only too familiar to hundreds in old as well as modern times. The forms of courtesy which were maintained in old times, the "having the honour to be," on which Mr. Carlyle was so severe, did, however, take some of its edge from the cruelty which, according

to the curt modern form, wounds more barbarously. Underlings may now assume all the airs of the authorities whom they represent; while according to ancient usage they must have used respectful language, and said any disagreeable thing that they may have been charged to say, only as the mouthpieces of others. Whatever the form, the practice is well known. Many not rude by nature have been tempted to follow it sometimes, and naturally brutal and overbearing men have habitually found their greatest enjoyment of power in the opportunities which it afforded them of being insolent with impunity. These savages look upon it as only reasonable and in the established order of things that they should follow their dispositions. Mr. Ayrton evidently feels that the kicker is very ill-used if the *kickes* ventures even to complain. But Mr. Ayrton, like many bullies, is unacquainted with one little maxim, by attention to which, the officials to whom he points as his exemplars managed to make good their ferocity. They "knew whom they kicked;" they took care to bestow their attentions on poor devils who dared not turn; they did not fling out right and left, utterly regardless of the persons whom they distinguished. They knew that kicking is the abuse, not the privilege, of official power; and they had the sense to "govern themselves accordingly," and to be chary of their toes where their subordinates were men who could command a hearing. But Mr. Ayrton, who believes that all in his department, great or small, strong or weak, are bound to submit to his humours, is impartial, and makes no distinction. It has never occurred to him that it is wrong to kick anybody, and that where kicking has been submitted to, it was not because it was right, but because it couldn't be resented; otherwise he would have

known the meaning of the proverb "Hit him hard, he has no friends." In his stupidity he has ventured to insult a man who has friends, and pretty influential ones too—a man, indeed, for whom the British nation is pleased to stand up, who has made himself a name quite independently of Mr. Ayrton. Why should this make any difference? asks the upright First Commissioner of Works; which is very like Sam Slick's silly question when he had got upon British soil, Why shouldn't I wallop my own nigger? And the answer is, that walloping, whether morally or physically, is not allowed here; and although, unhappily, it is practised with impunity on many who cannot defend themselves, it is never admissible. Mr. Ayrton, we are glad to find, feels no personal animosity towards Dr. Hooker, neither had he the least intention of hurting his feelings; what he did or said was in the ordinary way of business, just as a cook skins eels, or a fisherman crimps a cod. And Dr. Hooker, no doubt, was goaded to saying of Mr. Ayrton things which even Mr. Ayrton didn't deserve; so it is to be hoped that something will be withdrawn on both sides. Dr. Hooker's indiscretion would have made Mr. Ayrton strong but for his previous reputation. "An I had but a belly of any indifference, I were simply the most active fellow in Europe," says Sir John Falstaff; "an I had but a character of any indifference," Mr. Ayrton may now say, "I might have got the better of Dr. Hooker." But Mr. Ayrton has made himself too notorious. Nobody for a moment fancied that he could be otherwise than guilty; and, however badly Dr. Hooker may have committed himself, nobody would allow his indiscretion to be a set-off against the First Commissioner's barbarity. Mr. Bromley Davenport's remarks on the

occasion will give an idea of what is thought in the House of Mr. Ayrton's manners. After saying that if he could beat Mr. Ayrton in discourteous expressions it would be like pouring water upon a duck's back or applying a lady's riding-whip to the hide of a rhinoceros, Mr. Davenport went on to say:—

"When an hon. member put a perfectly decorous and civil question to a Minister of the Crown, he had a right to expect a decent answer, and not a mere concoction of words so framed that they just escaped the interference of the chair, but constituted at the same time an insult to the House and to the Speaker. (Hear, hear.) If, as he had reason to suppose, the right hon. gentleman and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had a yearly wager as to who should make the most discourteous answers to the most proper and orderly questions, he congratulated the right hon. gentleman, who had, to use a turf expression, 'won in a walk.' (Hear, hear, and laughter.) If he might advise the First Commissioner of Works, it would be to cultivate the Royal Parks less and himself more, and when next he felt disposed to be funny at the expense of hon. members, to ask some friend—assuming, of course, the very improbable fact that he had one (laughter)—to inspect his jokes, and point out to him the line of demarcation between humour and insolence." (Hear, hear.)

We should very much like to know whether any member of Mr. Gladstone's Ministry would dare to behave toward Mr. Guedalla or his friends as they presume to behave to gentlemen. We remember how, in the last winter, when Mr. Gladstone would scarcely vouchsafe a reply to a remonstrance which he had received from the Chief-Justice of England, he was profuse in his explanations to some New York editor. A sort of Jack Cade doctrine seems to be diffusing itself through Mr. Gladstone's convictions, that gentlemen ought to be put down. And hence Mr. Ayrton is clearly an

assistant whose services it is desirable to retain in the Cabinet. Mr. Guedalla told Mr. Gladstone very plainly that he would "stand no nonsense;" but gentlemen, who don't use threatening language, are obliged to put up with a great deal that Mr. Guedalla wouldn't tolerate, and Mr. Ayrton is just the person to let gentlemen understand the estimation in which they are held.

"This is some fellow,
Who, having been praised for bluntness,
doth affect
A saucy roughness. . . He cannot flatter, he!
An honest mind and plain; he must
speak truth.
An they will take it, so; if not, he's
plain."

One curious little episode in the Ayrton-Hooker epic is so highly flattering to the conduct of public business by Ministers that we cannot omit to notice it. An assistant, it seems, was wanted for the Curator at Kew, and, the Treasury having consented to allow the expense of such an officer, the Civil Service Commissioners were desired to ascertain by competitive examination the candidate best fitted for the appointment, and to report accordingly. The Commissioners named the successful candidate, and he was appointed. When he entered upon his duties it was discovered, and he himself admitted, that he did not possess one single qualification for his office. His unfitness having been represented to the department of works, and by that department to the Civil Service Commissioners, the latter body was pleased to say that the incapable assistant must be kept for six months, at the end of which time he might be removed if found to be still incompetent: but to pay an utterly useless man for six months was more than the Treasury could venture to do, and so, daring greatly, it cancelled the appointment forth-

with. As this little affair gives a broad hint as to how the business of the Civil Service Commission is conducted under the present Ministry, it will be well to look after that Board a little, and to scrutinise some more of their appointments.

Almost before the doors of the Palace of Westminster were closed, an alarm began to spread that Mr. Gladstone, taking advantage of the resolution in regard to local rates carried against him by Sir Massey Lopes, is going to make such a readjustment of the burdens on land as will ruin small proprietors, and, by setting landlords and tenants at variance, completely crush the landed interest out of Parliament. That Mr. Gladstone would like to execute vengeance upon the landowners we have no doubt at all. "Ye are grand jurors, are ye? I'll jure, ye, i' faith." But we have not yet got quite to admitting that everything next year is to be just as Mr. Gladstone may like. He was so weak throughout last session that his continuance in office from week to week could not be calculated on by even his most earnest supporters, and he surely did nothing in July or August to increase his strength. In the hurry of closing business after the relief came from Geneva, nobody had time to think much about Ministers;

but their misdoings are all remembered, and will surely be again considered in the autumn. Perhaps, instead of making war on landlords, Mr. Gladstone may find that he has enough to do in defending himself. It is not quite certain that tenant-farmers will be soft enough to fall into the trap that may be laid for them, neither is it certain that landlords are so helpless, or Parliament so madly destructive, as is supposed. At any rate, this is hardly the time to begin talking of next session; and certainly it was not to forecast the legislation of 1873, but to point out the poverty of that of 1872, that we began this present writing. The months just passed have proved beyond contradiction the weakness, rashness, and incapacity of the present Administration. The country, no doubt, will consider during the recess the deficiencies which events have brought to such clear light, and we shall not be surprised to find the hardest criticism proceed from Liberal mouths. But even for autumn talking the time is too early. All parties have run to seek fresh air and a renewal of strength. Let them enjoy the holiday to the full. Perhaps, when the tide shall be once more setting toward Westminster, we may have something to say concerning the prospect of 1873.

HORATIAN LYRICS.—NO. I.

HORACE IN ENGLAND IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY TO
MÆCENAS IN ELYSIUM.

ODE I. OF BOOK I.

MÆCENAS, my most dear and honoured master,
 Descended from a line of ancient kings;
 Mankind are still the same—a little faster—
 In love, war, drink, and trade, and other things.

Some Britons strive to win the Turf's blue ribbon,
 And on a horse's gallop stake their all,—
 Fellows who never read or heard of Gibbon,
 Nor care a rap for Rome's Decline and Fall.

Some—candidates for a most rotten borough—
 Bribe the unwashed ones for their greasy votes;
 On their home-farm some watch the ploughman's furrow,
 Or talk of bullocks and the price of oats;

And speak with vast contempt of jute and cotton,
 And everything that smacks of shop or trade;
 Swear that in England's state there's something rotten,
 And prophesy that all that's bright must fade.

Lo there! the enterprising man that sent your
 Cigars and coffee from the Spanish Main,
 Ruined and cleaned out by his last adventure,
 Bankrupt—but whitewashed—tries it on again.

Here's one who loves to sip his pint of claret,
 His legs beneath the brown mahogany;
 Some who've but gin or whisky grin and bear it,
 Or drink cold water, like my dog and I.

One joys in battle, like the conquering German,
 And fights for empire and his country's right;
 Another preaches a triumphant sermon
 In praise of peace, economy, and Bright.

The sportsman loves to tread the purple heather,
 Unmindful of his nursery-haunted wife;
 Or rides to hounds and swears there's naught like leather,
 Or in the red-deer's throttle sticks his knife.

But far beyond them all high soars the poet ;
 He ever lives, though nations rise and fall :
 I thought so once, dear patron, now I know it,—
 The Poet and his Friend outlast them all.

Our fame is ever bright, there's nought can rust us
 While this old world swings round the central sun ;
 I said so in the days of our Augustus,
 I swear it now in eighteen-seventy-one.

KNAPDALE.

Mæcenas atavis edite regibus
 O et præsidium et dulce decus meum,
 Sunt quos curriculo pulverem Olympicum
 Collegisse juvat, metaque fervidis
 Evitata rotis, palmaque nobilis,
 Terrarum dominos evehit ad Deos.
 Hunc, si mobillium turba Quiritium
 Certat tergeminis tollere honoribus :
 Illum, si proprio condidit horreo
 Quidquid de Libycis verritur arcis.
 Gaudentem patrios findere sarculo
 Agros, Attaliciis condicionibus
 Nunquam dimoveas, ut trabe Cypria
 Myrtoum pavidus nauta secet mare.
 Luctantem Icaris fluctibus Africum
 Mercator metuens, otium et oppidi
 Laudat rura sui; mox reficit rates
 Quassas, indocilis pauperiem pati.
 Est qui nec veteris pocula Massici,
 Nec partem solido demere de die
 Spernit, nunc viridi membra sub arbuto
 Stratus, nunc ad aquæ lene caput sacræ.
 Multos castra juvant, et lituo tubæ
 Permixtus sonitus, bellaque matribus
 Detestata. Manet sub Jove frigido
 Venator, teneræ conjugis immemor,
 Seu visa est catulis cerva fidelibus,
 Seu rupit teretes Marsus aper plagas.
 Me doctarum hederæ præmia frontium
 Dis miscent superis; me gelidum nemus
 Nympharumque leves cum Satyris chori
 Secernunt populo, si neque tibus
 Euterpe cohibet, nec Polyhymnia
 Lesboum refugit tendere barbiton.
 Quod si me lyricis vatibus inseres,
 Sublimi feriam sidera vertice.

TO ST. ANDREW.

ODE III. OF BOOK IV.

THAT man upon whose natal hour,
Thy beaming eye has smiled,
Inspiring with a Golfer's power,
Dear Saint, thy favoured child,

Ne'er shall the Turf's blue ribbon grace,
Victorious on the course,
His the first favourite for the race,
Or his the winning horse.

'Tis not for him, a Golfer born,
The warrior's pæan rings;
Nor his the laurel rudely torn
From the brow of conquered kings.

But the sunlit seas that, laughing, lave
Bright Eden's* sandy shore,
Shall whisper his name in each rippling wave
Till time shall be no more.

And the deep green seas, with their billowy dash
And their stern triumphant roar,
Shall bellow his name, as they thundering crash
On old St. Andrew's shore—

In Royal Ancient † records placed
Amidst the sons of fame,
With never-ending medals graced,
Great master of The Game.

Sweet Saint! whose spirit haunts the Course,
And broods o'er every Hole,
And gives the Driver vital force,
And calms the Putter's soul,

Thou giv'st me, to the world's last hour,
A Golfer's fame divine;
I boast—thy gift—a Driver's power;
If I can Put—'tis thine.

KNAPDALE.

* Eden, the appropriate name of the river which forms the north-west boundary of "The Happy Golfing Grounds" at St. Andrews.

† The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews.

AD MELPOMENEM.

Quem tu, Melpomene, semel
Nascentem placido lumine videris,
Illum non labor Isthmius
Clarabit pugilem, non equus impiger

Curru ducet Achaico
Victorem, neque res bellica Delis
Ornatum follis ducem,
Quod regum tumidas contuderit minas,

Ostendet Capitolio:
Sed quæ Tibur aquæ fertile præfluunt,
Et spissæ nemorum comæ,
Fingent Æolio carmine nobilem.

Romæ principis urbium
Dignatur soboles inter amabiles
Vatem ponere me choros;
Et jam dente minus mordeor invido.

O testudinis auræ
Dulcem quæ strepitum, Pieri, temperas,
O, mutis quoque piscibus
Donatura cyeni, si libeat, sonum.

Totum muneris hoc tui est,
Quod monstror digito prætereuntium
Romanæ fidicen lyra:
Quod spiro et placeo, si placeo, tuum est.

THE LATE ROYAL PROGRESS IN SPAIN.

SANTANDER, SPAIN, *September.*

THE recent Carlist insurrection in the Basque Provinces, and the presence of King Amadeus upon the north coast of Spain, tempted me in the early part of last month to visit a part of Europe which thus combined a very imminent political importance with charms of scenery and interest of association, that would in themselves be a sufficient claim upon the holiday tourist. It was on a delightful August evening that I found myself perched with my travelling companion upon the top of a diligence, descending the lovely valley of the Nervion, and as we crossed the last spur of the steep mountains which enclose it, obtained our first view of the basin in which the capital of the Province of Viscaya is situated. The mountains on the left are the loftiest in the Basque Provinces, attaining a height of six thousand feet; while three very remarkable cones, rising one behind the other in perfect sugar-loaf form, mark in the distance the spot where the river enters the sea. The setting sun shed a delicious glowing haze over this prospect; but before we reached Bilbao the shadows had darkened and the lights of the city begun to twinkle with unusual brilliancy; for King Amadeus was its guest, and we found ourselves in a blaze of illumination and a din of music as we threaded its densely thronged streets. All the world was in the Arenal or principal square, where, tired and dusty, we dismounted from our perch and joined the crowd. Here were triumphal arches covered with colored lanterns and inscriptions; balconies festooned with red and yellow, the national colours; flags fluttered from the white and yellow poles with which the streets were lined; rockets were constantly bursting in the air; and sounds as well as sights betokened that the people of Bilbao were either extremely well satisfied with their new King, or were shamming loyalty in a most egregious manner. There was something unreal and fanciful in suddenly emerging from the sombre and silent mountains, into this blaze of popular manifestation, to burst into a theatrical display which made Bilbao seem a city of fairyland, and King Amadeus an enchanted Prince whom some wicked sorcerer has conjured from the happy and peaceful court of his childhood to place him upon an uneasy throne in a land of rebellious and unruly gnomes. One could not, while looking at all these vehement demonstrations, and while observing the curious and eager crowd which watched for his every appearance, and followed the King with noisy acclamations—one could not, I say, forget that this was the population of one of the most noted Carlist cities in Spain; and if King Amadeus found it difficult to believe in the honesty of all he heard and saw, Don Carlos, on the other hand, is not much to be congratulated upon having as his partisans such a set of humbugs. However, there is no doubt a very large proportion of the population have a genuine hatred of the Legitimist faction, and the clerical bigotry which it represents, and if they tend rather to republicanism than to constitutional monarchy, are nevertheless not actively hostile to the experiment, especially since the conduct of the king in calling the radical party to his

councils affords a guarantee of his thorough sincerity in his attempt to carry out a responsible government with entire loyalty. As perhaps the reader has not followed the politics of Spain very closely during the last year, a word on the present political situation is necessary, in order to the better understanding of the motives which induced the King to make the present tour, and the interest which consequently attached to it. At the same time I will not attempt to enter upon a detailed account of the eight ministerial crises which have taken place within the last ten months, and of the causes which led to them, partly because there are as many different versions in regard to them as there were crises, and partly because they did not reflect credit upon anybody concerned in them, except the King himself; and the history of one Spanish intrigue is so like another that the clearest intellect becomes confused in attempting to remember them apart. Political life here is a struggle, not for the triumph of principles but of persons. It does not disdain the knife or the revolver as means to an end; and consistency lies not in being true to any party, but exclusively to one's own interests. Hence it is not to be wondered at that the public men who invited King Amadeus to Spain should be bitterly opposed to him from the moment that he refused to support them against a parliamentary majority, and to violate the first principles of the Constitution by putting his name to a decree arbitrarily suspending its guarantees. The notion which these gentlemen entertained of constitutional government appears to have been, that the King was to be a tool in their hands, prepared to obey them when they no longer commanded the confidence of the country, and to force their policy

upon it at the point of the bayonet. Their whole quarrel with him now is based upon his refusal to lend himself to any such unworthy system of administration; and they find to their astonishment that the Prince whom they brought from Italy to act as their puppet is a firm and courageous man, who has a clear and decided view of political right and wrong, and is determined to stick to the simple letter of what he believes to be his duty, if it costs him his life. Hence the "Unionists" and a fraction of the "Progressists" have now banded themselves together into what is called the Conservative party, and which contains probably all the men who were lately Ministers of the King, though only some have had the courage openly to avow themselves its partisans. Many leading politicians well known to the public as supporters of constitutional monarchy, and who were prominent members of the revolution which dethroned Queen Isabella, are now all more or less disloyal, though the recent elections have shown that they have no following in the country, for unfortunately "the Opposition" means, not an opposition to the political party in power in the Cortes, but to the dynasty on the throne. Thus such men as Sagasta, Serrano, Topete, Rio Rosas, are bitter enemies of Zorilla and the men now in power; but the fear is that their vengeance may be wreaked not in the Cortes upon their political opponents, but in some quite other way upon the King, who, believing his present Ministers to have a parliamentary majority, called them to the government. This party, who are called Radicals, though the term signifies nothing politically analogous to the same word with us, are altogether an experiment. Their policy in Church and educational matters is more liberal than

that of their opponents; but, as I have already said, it is not so much a question of measures as of men; and if the latter could only be trusted, it is probable that the government of the country would be carried on as well by one set as the other, so far as mere principles go.

Besides these two great divisions, which may be called the "Outs" and the "Ins," are the dynastic parties and the Republicans. The dynastic parties consist of the Carlists, the Alphonsists, and the Montpensierists. The two latter may be said temporarily to have fused; the idea being that the Duke de Montpensier should act as Regent until Don Alphonsino comes of age. Lastly, the Republicans are a formidable party numerically, but they do not seem to constitute the same danger to the existing Government as do some of the other parties. It will thus be seen that there are at present seven political parties in Spain—the Unionists, the Progressists, the Radicals, the Republicans, the Carlists, Alphonsists, and Montpensierists; but if we consider the two first and the two last to have temporarily coalesced for political purposes, they are reduced to five. The Carlists would only be dangerous if the Republicans could be induced to join in any insurrectionary movement excited by them. This they positively refused to do upon the last occasion. As they have no party whatever in the army, but, on the contrary, find in both branches of the service their bitterest enemies, and as they are numerically an insignificant fraction of the Cortes, the chance of a Carlist restoration is extremely remote. In the same way, the Republican party have no military or naval allies; and as revolutions in this country are invariably made by the land and sea forces, the Republicans have not

much immediate prospect of overturning monarchical institutions of some sort or other. A greater danger seems to arise from the leaven of Alphonsism, which is said to pervade both services. There are sinister rumors afloat of the whole of the artillery, for instance, being partisans of the son of the ex-Queen; nor is it possible to say what conspiracies may not even now be hatching among the generals, admirals, colonels, and captains, to whom a successful *pronunciamento* means a step in rank, or getting into office. The political system here seems to be carefully framed upon the principle of handing the lives and liberties of the people over bodily to the soldiers and sailors, whose sole duty should be to protect them from foreign foes; instead of which their one occupation is making war on each other and upon voters generally. Every soldier and sailor having a vote, they are shuffled all over the country before every election, so as to swell the Government list at doubtful places, and to influence by their bayonets the electors generally. Where every change of Ministry means a change of generals, brigadiers, colonels, admirals, &c., it may easily be imagined what an interest the army takes in a general election, and what an admirable revolutionary machinery is thus kept primed and ready to go off at the touch of the first popular and ambitious general who knows how to work it. Hence no Prime Minister has a chance of remaining long in office in Spain, unless he be a general as well; and the principal danger to the present Government seems likely to be not their parliamentary, but their military and naval opponents. To attempt to introduce the forms of constitutional monarchy into such a chaos of violence and conspiracy, seems indeed hopeless—since assassination is elevated to

the dignity of a fine art, and the point of honour even among Cabinet Ministers consists not in refusing to be privy to secret murder, but in refusing to divulge who inspired it. When the army is used, not to defend the nation, but to throttle its liberties—and office is an end which justifies every means—the theory of constitutional government becomes a good deal more inapplicable than in the Fiji Islands, where, since cannibalism has been abandoned, it has been practised with considerable success. The Republicans hope by the application of their principles to raise Spain to the condition of Mexico or one of the South American republics, where Spanish Republicans change their presidents by hanging them to the spires of their cathedrals, and average over the whole continent about eight revolutions a-year; while their mode of dealing with attempts at constitutional monarchy, as practised upon the Emperor Maximilian, does not differ very much from that attempted the other day in the streets of Madrid upon the person of King Amadeus. From all which it will appear that the prospects of this bold young Prince do not seem of the brightest. If I have not painted his position in glowing colours, it is not because I believe success to be absolutely impossible, but because if it is achieved it will be owing to a combination of qualities as rare as the task to which they must be applied is difficult and dangerous. The royal progress of a monarch through the most disaffected part of his dominions was an episode so full of interest under these circumstances, that I was glad to avail myself of exceptional facilities for observing it, and of judging for myself of its political character and importance.

A continuation of stormy weather, which rendered the crossing of the

bar at the mouth of the Nervion a work of difficulty, delayed us for three days at Bilbao, and showed us quite as much of that place as we cared to see. The city, which, with its suburbs, contains a population of nearly 40,000 inhabitants, lies embosomed in mountains at a distance of about seven miles from the sea; but the beauty of its situation by no means compensates for the stifling humidity of its climate; and the reputation which it possesses of being unhealthy is probably not ill-merited. It possesses a population unusually enterprising for a Spanish town; and the increasing development of the mineral resources of its neighbourhood furnishes its testimony to this fact. Its quays, wharfs, and river stocked with shipping, chiefly British, indicated a very considerable degree of commercial activity, due chiefly to the very large augmentation in the export of iron which has taken place within the last few years. The most celebrated mines are those of Somorrostro, about ten miles distant, and situated near the sea-shore. The ore occurs abundantly here in beds from three to ten feet deep, and furnishes 85 per cent of mineral. This is probably one of the richest peroxide of iron deposits in Europe, and has furnished from time immemorial the steel from which the Toledan blades were forged. There is a line of steamboats now expressly devoted to the transport of this ore to England. It is a curious sight to see the women loading the ships with their bulky cargoes, carrying it in baskets on their heads, singing gaily in chorus the while, and tripping up and down the steep planks with their short petticoats, brown bare legs, and straight supple backs. What the men do beyond lounge under the archways of the market-places, or sit smoking on the stone benches on the

quays, I have not been able to discover. The able-bodied population of this part of Spain is decidedly the women, who in actual muscular strength seem to excel the men. There are few carts or carriages to be seen in Bilbao: a good deal of the draught-work is done by bullocks with sledges, in front of which is a small keg with a couple of taps, through which water is perpetually trickling under the runners. The streets of the old town are close and narrow, but are not so characteristic as in other towns; in fact, Bilbao has somewhat of a cosmopolitan character, and aspires to a higher degree of civilisation than its neighbours. But its chief glory lies in its being the principal city of those Basque Provinces which have contrived through all the revolutionary wars of which they have been the theatre to maintain their own *fueros* or privileges intact. Occupying very much the same position with relation to the rest of Spain, so far as race, language, and customs are concerned, that Wales does to England, they have preserved a much greater autonomy, and may even rival the Isle of Man, in the nature and extent of their special rights and privileges. It is the pride of this race not only that they were the original occupiers of the country, but that they have never been conquered; and even now they do not recognise King Amadeus so much in his capacity of King of Spain as Lord or Señor of Biscay. Thus, on the triumphal arch which had been erected beneath his windows in the hotel at which he resided during his stay at Bilbao was the following inscription: "Al Rey de España y Señor de Viscaya." Above this were the arms of the province of Viscaya and the town of Bilbao. Those of the town consisted of a representation of the old bridge of San Antonio, which still forms one of the most

striking and picturesque objects of interest in the city; and by its side are two wolves, the cognisance of Diego Lopez (Lupus) de Haro, Lord of Biscay, who built it about the year 1356. The arms of the province, which were on the reverse of the shield, were still more curious, and consisted of the tree of Guernica, the two wolves of Lupus, and eight gold crosses. The interesting and significant feature of this is the tree of Guernica. About thirty miles to the east of Bilbao, and not far from the sea-coast, lies the little village of Guernica; here meet every two years the Parliament of Basque, senators chosen by the communes of the three provinces of Guipuscoa, Alava, and Viscaya, who vote their own taxes and make their own laws with a supreme indifference to the central Government: in fact they have maintained "home rule," though the tree of Guernica, under which in the dim ages of antiquity it was supposed to have been inaugurated, exists only as an emblem upon the national escutcheon. It was only in 1808 that the French soldiery cut down the old Basque oak, a tree which, according to Mariana, was very old in 1334. A "Casa de Juntas" has since been built upon its site; and any one interested in legislative relics of antiquity, by visiting it on the 1st of next July, may see the Basque senators at work.

How long, in these times of change, they may be able to maintain the extraordinary privileges they possess, is a matter of interesting speculation when one considers what they are. In the first place, their religious independence is complete; they have no bishop, and the parish priest is exempt from all diocesan control. It was proposed to introduce a change into this anomalous state of affairs; but I much doubt whether the present Govern-

ment will venture, until their own tenure of office is more assured, to touch so thorny a question. An even more important privilege is exemption from military conscription, or the blood-tax, as it is called in Spain: in addition to this they pay no duty on tobacco, and determine the amount of their own taxes generally, while the mere fact of being born a Basque constitutes a patent of nobility. So that it is not to be wondered at if the popularity of a King of Spain depends here entirely upon how much he intends to show himself Lord of Biscay and how little King of Spain, and that the inhabitants look with distrust at a system of government which professes to have notions far too advanced and enlightened to regard with favour *fueros* by which one part of Spain is so highly privileged at the expense of all the rest. Regarded from this point of view, I think the King had reason to be most agreeably surprised by the enthusiasm which the population of Bilbao manifested in his favour, when we remember that one half the population is Carlist, the other half Republican, and the whole of it Basque and devoted to their *fueros*. The popular demonstrations which marked King Amadeus's progress through the streets were all that could be expected; the Arenal or fashionable square was always crowded in the evening, while the band was playing, with señoritas, with whom the King seemed specially popular. *Vivas* followed his carriage, applause greeted his entrance into the theatre; and under no circumstances, however much individuals might have been opposed to him, was the slightest sign of disrespect manifested.

One day we drove down to the new watering-place of Las Arenas, a bathing establishment which has just been opened by two enterpris-

ing young men upon the sandy beach to the right of the mouth of the river. Exactly opposite is the old port and watering-place of Portugalete, behind which are the extensive iron-works of Baracaldo. The road along the river-bank is full of interest and of beauty. The ships, which extend with few intervals almost in a line from the town to the sea, seem pressed in between the lofty rugged sides of the mountains which furnish them with their cargoes; while at Luchana is the bridge celebrated in the former Carlist war as the scene of one of the most brilliant exploits of our blue-jackets, who, under Captains Ebsworth, Lapidge, and Henry, stormed and carried the heights in rear, thus enabling Espartero and his army to occupy the position and relieve the town after it had undergone a sixty days' siege by the Carlists—a feat which won for the Spanish General the title of Conde de Luchana, and for our captains nothing but hard knocks. It is not to be wondered at if, after its two sieges and painful Carlist experiences, it should have regarded the prospect of a third the other day with some apprehension.

I was disappointed in the appearance of the Basque peasantry on market-day: their costumes were by no means sufficiently striking or different from ordinary rustic attire to merit description, beyond a general love of bright colours, and a profusion on the part of the females of magnificent hair hanging in plaits. When the sight is seen, the principal churches visited, and the town overlooked from the splendid points of view which command it, Bilbao may be considered "done," and I was glad to see the troops assemble on the Arenal, and hear the band strike up the inspiring strains of the Royal Spanish March, for it was the sign of a move on the part

of royalty, and a great beating up of all the carriages in the place by black-coated gentlemen in white ties, and a general movement of an excited crowd down the river-bank indicated that the embarkation was to take place at Olaveaga, a village about two miles from the town. As I followed the regiment which marched there, I was much struck by the favourable contrast which they presented to French troops, not merely in their *physique*, but in their well-drilled and soldier-like appearance, though the bare foot and sandal which forms their *chaussure* on the march must always to some extent detract from this. A small steamer was waiting for the King, in which he was to be conveyed across the bar to the ironclad frigate *Vittoria*, which was lying outside in readiness to convey him to his next destination, Gijon, the port of Oviedo, and a considerable crowd lined the bank to see him depart. A great popping of rockets in the air announced the moment when his Majesty stepped upon the plank to walk on board, and sundry hearty *vivas* were given him as a farewell, while I observed one old woman presented him with a bouquet, which the King received with a hearty shake of the hand, to her intense delight. It was evident, whatever may have been the feeling of the population in regard to him before they had seen him, that it had undergone a considerable change now; and among the common people, at all events, the enthusiasm seemed perfectly genuine. The ships lying in the river hung out their gayest bunting as we passed, and here and there a cannon was fired; quite a salvo greeted us as we "came to" off Portugaleta to take in a deputation of notables from that town, the quays of which were lined with ladies waving pocket-handkerchiefs, and its balconies

hung with many-coloured draperies, and so out into the open sea, where, in spite of the little bobble of waves, the huge frigate was lying motionless, dressed with flags, with her yards manned, and thundered out her twenty-one guns as we approached.

The sun was setting as we steamed round the precipitous headland, and along the iron-bound coast, against which this proverbially stormy sea is constantly beating, and tinted with bright light and shadow its overhanging crags and deep fissures. The lofty mountain-ranges, which are in fact but the continuation of the Pyrenees, skirting the whole length of the south shore of the Bay of Biscay, rear their majestic crests to a height of many thousand feet above the sea, and present a coastline of the grandest and most imposing as well as of the most dangerous description. Were it not for the inhospitable character of these shores, they would well repay the yachtsman. Unfortunately the ports are few and far between, and generally very difficult to enter, while the prevailing character of the weather is wet and stormy. We were exceptionally favoured in this respect, and during the three days and nights that we tempted fortune upon these shores, experienced royal weather. At nine on the following morning we were off Gijon, the port of Oviedo. Here, as at all the places along the coast, excepting Ferrol and Corunna, the *Vittoria* lay out at sea, and the disembarkation was effected in a tender, on the deck of which the King usually received the Mayor and Corporation, who came thus far to meet him. The municipal worthies of Gijon soon became frightfully seasick, and went through moments of agony and contortions of countenance, in their endeavour to sustain a conversation with his Majesty, to

whom such sensations are unknown, in the intervals of their qualms, which were amusing to behold. As we rounded the long pier which forms the small port, two crowded tiers of spectators burst into view ; then followed the usual discharge of rockets, while the *Vittoria* added her salutes to the din, and the people of Gijon became conscious that the monarch, whose arrival had been so long anticipated, was in their midst.

The first act of the authorities was to carry His Majesty off to a sumptuous breakfast which had been prepared for him ; but their intentions in this respect were evidently better than their power of arrangement, for they had forgotten the two most essential points when one invites a guest to a meal—first, that the meal should be cooked, and secondly, that a seat should be provided for him at the festive board. The excellent authorities had spread a table for forty, to which they had exactly invited forty of their own number ; as the king and his party numbered thirty, they were totally unprovided for, and both lists had to be judiciously pruned down, which probably did not give so much offence as it would have done had there been any breakfast to sit down to ; but these same forgetful authorities had also forgotten the cook. The viands were there, but raw ; the King's culinary establishment had therefore to be sent for, which delayed the actual breakfast till four o'clock in the afternoon. It required no little philosophy on an empty stomach to see the point of these two jokes ; but I think the King was fully compensated for the personal inconvenience he sustained by the great amusement the whole episode afforded, and the moral that was to be drawn from it. The fact is, that he travels with a remarkably small retinue in comparison with

former Spanish monarchs, and especially the late Queen, who never moved with fewer than 300 to 400 attendants ; but it is not unlikely that King Amadeus in future travels may reduce still more the number of his staff.

We had received many disquieting rumours regarding the disaffection of the population of this town, and the cool nature of the reception which was likely to be accorded to the King ; but this had been the case at nearly all the towns we had visited, and been invariably belied. It is true that the provinces through which the royal progress was now being made were notoriously the most openly committed to the King's enemies. The Basque provinces, as I have already explained, and as events proved, were Carlist ; while the Asturias, in which we now were, are the stronghold of the Alphonsist party. It is singular how close an analogy may be found between French and Spanish parties. Thus the animosity which exists between the Legitimists and the Orleanists in France finds its parallel in the antagonism of Alphonsists to the Carlists. Here, it is true, there are no Imperialists to complicate the situation ; but the strength of King Amadeus's Government, as in that of Monsieur Thiers, lies in the divisions among themselves of the factions that oppose it. Again, a remarkable difference exists between the policy of the Republican party here and in France. The whole tendency of French Republicanism is towards centralisation ; they seek to strengthen the machinery of personal government as much as possible, in order that the President, when the time comes, may be in a position with the army at his back and with the reins of absolute power in his hands, to prevent anybody in the country being anything but Republican. The Spaniards, hav-

ing already had considerable experience of the system on the other side of the Atlantic, are convinced that Republicanism that shows sport in the shape of perpetual revolutions is best secured by decentralisation, and their first principle is therefore federation. As there is no sympathy whatever between the different states into which Spain would then be divided, and as no one of them is any more fit for self-government individually than the nation is in its collective capacity, such an arrangement would usher in an era of civil war, for every state would back its own presidential candidate with its army, which would practically efface Spain more completely from the map of Europe than she is already, so far as her political influence is concerned. That section of the population of Gijon, I was informed, who were not Alphonsist were Republicans; they have since returned a Republican candidate; still, so far as outward demonstrations were concerned, they received the King very well. There were no shouts of *viva*, but we were assured that Asturians never shout, and always received Queen Isabella in silence. There was scarcely a balcony from which either flags or what appeared to be counterpanes or bed-curtains were not hanging. And whatever may have been the sentiments which the ladies and gentlemen who thronged the better class of houses concealed, there was one which they could not disguise, and that was the most intense curiosity to see the person of his Majesty. There was a special reason for this interest. Ever since the arrival of King Amadeus in Spain, the most absurd stories have been circulated in regard to him. If physical murder is cultivated as a desirable political accomplishment here, moral assassination has been carried to a pitch of the highest per-

fection—a fact which may perhaps be owing to the circumstance that the Church lends its high and powerful influence to its more complete development.

Not that the Spanish clergy confine their political machinations to inventing scurrilous slanders about the King's private character: no fewer than 177 of these apostles of a religion of love actually have led, or are leading, Carlist bands in Catalonia at the present moment, while many more are now only waiting for a new opportunity to exchange the missal for the Martini-Henry. But a far safer and scarcely less effective method of warfare is the manufacture of lies in regard to the person and habits of the King. Thus the people of Gijon were informed that he was hump-backed, that he had only one eye, that he could not speak a word of Spanish, that he travelled with a suite composed of Italians, to say nothing of improper characters, &c. When the near approach of the King rendered it necessary to explain the contradiction which his appearance would present to these stories, then they spread the report that it was not the King at all, but a handsome officer sent to represent him. So persons of bad character are actually paid by the same party that attempted the King's life the other night, to follow him, pass themselves off as his intimates, write compromising letters to him, &c. Nor do the opposition newspapers at Madrid shrink from giving currency to rumours in regard to his private habits, the absolute untruth of which is susceptible of proof—as, for instance, that he drinks, when it is notorious that wine never passes his lips. It was not to be wondered at that the balconies should be crowded at every town we entered with a population anxious to judge for themselves of the subject of all

this scandal and fiction. Fortunately the bearing and aspect of the King are eminently calculated to give the lie to his enemies. Upwards of six feet in height, his slender soldier-like figure dominates the crowd which always accompanied him in his numerous promenades—for he never drives when he can walk; while his perfectly cool and unembarrassed air, frank but somewhat stern countenance, excepting when it lights up in conversation, and vigilant but reckless eye, form a combination calculated to disconcert the conspirator who has to confront it, and to inspire confidence in those of his immediate supporters, who feel that they can depend to the last on his courage and loyalty—in fact, in the expressive but somewhat disrespectful vernacular of a young naval friend of mine, “he is an awfully cool, plucky-looking beggar.” What gives him a singular advantage over those with whom he has to deal is, that he has no private end to serve. Called here after having four times refused the position, he ultimately accepted it for reasons of state and European politics; but he came here with the determination of governing strictly constitutionally or not at all. Whether the system can succeed in a country not adapted to it, is not an affair with which he has anything to do; nor does the fact that he receives about a dozen anonymous letters daily, either of kindly warning, with details as to how the next attempt at his life will be made and how it is to be avoided, or of menaces, affect his resolution to give the experiment, which destiny seems to have decided must be thoroughly and honestly made through his instrumentality, a fair trial. If it fails he will accept his fate, whatever it may be, upon the simple principle that if a man acts up to his highest convictions, and never swerves from

them, he is bound to let the consequences take care of themselves. His position, therefore, gives him not the slightest anxiety. There is not a man in Europe apparently more entirely free from care in regard to the future. “*Fais ce que dois, advienne que pourra*,” is his motto, and it relieves him from all further trouble—and not “uneasy lies the head that wears the crown” of Spain. These few personal details will give the key to the popularity which King Amadeus so rapidly wins in each town he visits, and especially with those who have the advantage of knowing him. His great energy and vigour of body; the facility of access to him which he accords to all classes; the homely and fearless way in which he mixes, regardless of protection, in the common crowd; the readiness he manifests to visit whatever the authorities desire to show him, and to understand the local interests; the utter absence of affectation or ceremony, beyond what the exigencies of his position demand,—are all traits which quickly find their way to the popular heart; and in a country where they have never, during the present generation, had a king who could ride, swim, shoot, and prove himself equal or superior in all manly and athletic exercises to his fellows, the novelty adds to the charm, and the constant remark of the common people on looking at him is, that he is “*todos hombre*”—all a man. It was rather amusing to listen to the originality of the shouts of the people who were thus won over. Thus “*Viva il rey sympathico!*” “*Viva il rey democratico!*” and even “*Viva il rey republicano!*” I once heard. The more Conservative shouts were, “The hereditary King,” “The constitutional King.”

Gijon is a small but rising port, containing some 15,000 inhabitants.

It is situated upon the neck of a peninsula, and backed by lofty mountain-ranges, but in itself is ugly and uninteresting. The streets are broad, and laid out with tolerable regularity, but the houses are poor and low. The port is visited by about 1800 ships a-year, the article of export being principally coal from the extensive fields which lie in the neighbourhood, and which are being rapidly developed. It is exported chiefly in French and Spanish ships to the Mediterranean. The mountain-slopes furnish another article of commerce besides coal, in the shape of nuts, £200,000 worth of which are transported annually to England; besides which there is a considerable trade with Cuba in tobacco, cider and other articles of home manufacture being sent back in return. We visited the tobacco factory, which had been put into its gayest attire to receive the King, and there saw 1500 women and girls absorbed in the task of rolling cigars and cigarettes with inconceivable rapidity. Gijón is also a watering-place for Oviedo and the Asturias generally, but the accommodation is wretched in the extreme; and the poorer classes dispense with bathing-machines, and sit in rows upon the beach, dressing, undressing, and drying themselves with the greatest simplicity and *nonchalance*. We tried to get into the theatre in the evening, but found a difficulty about the places. This arose from the fact of the Alphonists having engaged the greater part of the boxes a few evenings before and locked them, so as to prevent there being a good house on the occasion of the King's presence. In spite of the empty appearance which this produced, we heard that the reception had been nevertheless tolerably cordial. In the evening the King walked up and down the fashionable prome-

nade, mixing freely with the crowd, consisting chiefly of ladies, which had assembled there.

A railway connects Gijón with the coal-mines of Sama and Nalon. Of late years the exploration of these extensive deposits, which stretch for miles on both sides of the river Nalon, has acquired a considerable development since the opening of this railway, and will receive a still greater impetus when the line from Oviedo to Gijón, which follows the other side of the valley and passes through the centre of a coal-region, is opened. The coal-beds in some places are said to run thirteen feet thick, and are worked by English companies and miners as well as those of the country. The largest proprietor in this part of the province, and the most influential member of its aristocracy, is the Marquis de Campo Sangrado, who possesses grand castellated mansions both in Oviedo and Avilés, besides sundry chateaux dotted about the country. His alliance with the royal family of Spain—for he married a daughter of Queen Christina—renders him naturally a zealous partisan of his nephew Don Alphonso, and it is probably largely owing to this circumstance that this part of the country is so warmly committed to the cause of the young Prince. No doubt the historical associations connected with the Asturias also contribute to this sentiment. The valleys in the immediate neighbourhood of Oviedo are indeed the cradle of the Spanish monarchy. At Covadonga, a mountain village about thirty miles distant, Pelayus, the Duke of the Goths, was proclaimed king in 719, and founded the nucleus of the Spanish kingdom: in honour of which event, and as a possible successor to the throne then established, the Duke de Montpensier, a few years ago, visited this very remote and inac-

cessible spot, and erected an obelisk, an act which increased the fame of the French Duke as much as of the Gothic. All the towns and valleys of this neighborhood have a story to tell of the romantic leader who, issuing from his mountain fastnesses at the head of his valiant Goths, drove their Moorish conquerors from the country, thus checking their further advance into Europe; and the lapse of a thousand years has not dimmed the lustre of his exploits. Gijon itself was one of the first towns liberated from the infidel invaders, and Pelayus took from it the title of Conde de Gijon. The ties of family, as well as of historical association, both tend, therefore, to attach this population to the late dynasty.

We left Gijon, accompanied to the station by a considerable crowd of the curious, by the railway which connects the town with the mines of Sama, but only followed it about ten miles to a station called Morena, making at one place an ascent of several hundred feet on a very steep gradient by means of a stationary engine, on a sharp curve at the top of which the royal carriage went off the track, thus involving a delay of an hour, which enabled the King to examine the machinery and derive some information as to the statistics of the line. At Morena, a carriage and three, with coachman and postilion in red and gold livery, was waiting for the King, with a mounted escort, and humbler equipages for the rest of the party; and a drive of five or six miles through lovely scenery took us to Oviedo, the mountain capital of the Asturias, in regard to the disaffection of which disquieting rumours had been rife. As we approached, we perceived that flags, decorations, and crowds were not wanting; but the rows of eager, excited faces between which we drove betrayed no other sentiment but that

of intense curiosity. Now and then a solitary *viva* might be heard; and occasionally a shower of laudatory poems came fluttering down into the King's carriage from a balcony; more enthusiastic admirers threw bouquets; and a white dove with a blue ribbon around its neck made quite a touching descent upon the royal *cortège*. There was, of course, no lack of rockets or of the din of martial music, especially the Royal March; and in front of the Ayuntamiento the crowd was so dense that it was with some difficulty that we forced our way through it to go in quest of lodgings for ourselves. We were by this time becoming accustomed to the construction of Spanish hotels and lodging-houses, in which two or three bedrooms, entirely destitute of windows, open like closets off a common sitting-room, which furnishes the light and air for the whole party.

Oviedo was the most thoroughly characteristic and interesting town we had seen in the north of Spain. Its streets are narrow, but broad enough to admit on both sides of covered arcades, which support balconies; while fountains and market-places abound, where picturesquely-attired groups are always to be found collected. It happened to be market-day; and the peasantry, who perhaps appeared in an extra holiday attire in honour of the King's presence, were seen to greater advantage. The dress of the women consisted of a coloured bodice, generally red or green, over which they wore some bright-coloured handkerchief, or else a black tippet; their long hair hung in tresses beneath neatly-folded handkerchiefs, often of common white lace, which they allowed to fall in a graceful fold upon the back; skirts with party-coloured flounces, the commonest combinations being red, green and yellow, completed the costume. Sometimes

they wore shoes, but rarely stockings. The men wore bright-coloured waistcoats, carrying their jackets on one shoulder, after the manner of hussars; large purple sashes, folded many times round the waist, supported the black trousers reaching to the knee, where they were slashed to admit of the appearance of three or four inches of loose white drawers, which were or were not tucked into the black gaiters, as the case might be, or more often fluttered over bare legs. Their caps were sometimes a bright green, but more often the *montera*, a sort of one-sided cocked hat, or ordinary wideawake gone mad. The first act of the arrivals from the country, I observed in both sexes, was to go to church. As the women far outnumbered the men, the churches in the morning were crowded with the female rural population, who entered carrying their baskets of produce on their heads, and placing them on the ground by their sides, while they paid their devotions, caused the church itself to look something like a market-place. The special interest which attaches to the churches in Oviedo lies in their extreme antiquity, many of them dating back to the earlier part of the ninth century. To the antiquarian their architecture, and the traces of the Moorish invasion which they contain, diversified with pagan antiques, furnishes an endless source of interest and study, more real and curious than that which is to be got out of the relics of quite another character contained in the cathedral. We applied to have these exhibited, but the priests, who are intensely anti-Amadean, made so many difficulties that we gave it up. Indeed they went so far, on hearing of the intention of the King to visit the cathedral, as to lock its doors. As the hour approached, however, they thought it better not to lay themselves open

to reprisals by actually infringing the law, so they contented themselves with breaking off the mass precipitately, and being invisible on the occasion of his visits. As a general rule, the King on his arrival in a town seeks out the humblest church to say his prayers in, before visiting the ecclesiastical curiosities.

The cathedral of Oviedo is not architecturally interesting. Its chief glory is its relics. Here are to be seen manna from the desert, a firkin from the marriage of Cana, and the bones of numerous saints. Here, too, are a crucifix carved by Nicodemus, and a sandal of St. Peter. Then there is a portable altar used by the apostles, the cross of Pelayus, the local hero, made in heaven out of Asturian oak, and dropped from the clouds before him as a sign of victory, together with another cross made by angels. None of these marvels were we permitted to behold, and could only look with respect, therefore, upon the balcony, into which you descend from the Camera Santa by a couple of steps, and which projects into the cathedral, from which three times a-year is exhibited the shroud of our Saviour, when the peasantry present before it whatever article of food or clothing they desire should acquire a special virtue.

Oviedo, which contains some 26,000 inhabitants, lies beautifully embosomed in mountains, some of which rise to a height of 10,000 feet. Their valleys, as may be supposed, not only furnish magnificent scenery, but first-rate salmon and trout fishing. There are many beautiful points of view immediately above the town, and it possesses to perfection that charm of all Spanish cities—a public walk or *alameda*. The centre of a wild, uncivilised district, it affords many evidences of the rough character of its vicinity.

Many miles from the nearest railway, the perpetual rumble of ponderous diligences, to which are attached any number of mules and horses in grotesque confusion, echoed through its streets; lumbering mule-carts on two wheels, with sides and roof made of matting, and wheels a solid block of circular wood, or hollowed out so as to leave one gigantic spoke, are sights that still tell of ages now gone by in other countries.

The authorities certainly were not niggardly in regard to fireworks and illuminations, although it was reported that the Alcalde had announced some months ago, when such an event seemed most improbable, that if the King ever came to Oviedo, he would never go out to receive him. That worthy had most conspicuously changed his mind; and nothing could be more complimentary or loyal than the attitude of the local functionaries. Of course the Casas Solares, or huge castellated mansions of the aristocracy, looked gloomy enough, as I believe they always do; but the rest of the town was bright and gay. On one triumphal arch was inscribed the names of the Liberal statesmen of Spain, with the inscription—"From the Radical party to Amadeus." On another was quoted the well-known phrase of his Majesty, "I do not seek to impose myself upon a loyal people." The principal square was brilliantly lighted up at night with colored lamps; and the King walked freely among the crowd; while children collected in groups and danced to the music they made themselves when the band was not playing to a song the constant refrain of which was "*Viva la libertad! viva Amadeo!*"

The King, with the indefatigable energy that characterises him, drove about fifteen miles into the mountains to visit the Government cannon-foundry of Turbia, situated in this somewhat inaccessible spot in con-

sequence of the proximity of coal and iron, but now rapidly falling into disrepair from lack of funds. Not above a quarter of the workmen are employed which the factory originally accommodated, and the roof of part of it has fallen in. We preferred rather strolling in the environs of Oviedo to making this pilgrimage, the more especially as we had a considerable drive in store for us the same afternoon to the small but politically important port of Avilez. We left Oviedo at 8 p.m., amid the first cheers which we had heard in the place; it was rather striking to mark the altered aspect with which the crowd regarded the King after he had passed two days with them, and the evident change in their feelings towards him. There was a hearty ring in the *vivas* of the common people as he drove through them, a fact which only tended to render the attitude of the aristocracy and clergy the more sulkily. The *cortège*, consisting of the King's carriage and three, four or five private carriages, and a diligence and eight mules, rattled at a lively pace up and down the steep hillsides and through the lovely scenery which we traversed for more than three hours before reaching Avilez. From the highest dividing ridge a magnificent view was obtained of some of the loftiest peaks of the sierra, of smiling valleys waving with Indian corn, of hillsides clothed with chestnuts, or here and there where the soil was barren, in sharp contrast to them, rugged heather-clad braes like those of Wales or Scotland. Here for the first time I saw the peasantry running from their work in the fields to come and kneel by the wayside as the King passed—an act which he usually made signs to them to discontinue; but a still more striking characteristic of this population was the beauty of the

younger portion of the female sex. In the villages we passed through this was very apparent, but as we entered the town of Avilez, it materially enhanced the charms of the very enthusiastic reception which was awaiting us. We were aware that Avilez was as notorious for its loyalty as some of the other towns in the province were for the opposite sentiment. Out of its small population of 8000, upwards of 80 of the wealthiest citizens had signed the invitation to the King, and had taken a prominent part in organising the reception. The deputy for the town is a warm supporter of Zorilla, and the consequence is, that the political sentiment of the place is mainly Radical. Hence it had exhausted all its energies in demonstrations of loyalty—and the balconies were literally crammed with ladies, whose bright laughing faces, waving pocket-handkerchiefs, and gay not to say gaudy coloured petticoats, produced a most lively and brilliant effect. Avilez is a little-visited, quaint, primitive place, composed of covered arcades and balconies; and the cordial attitude of the population made us feel at home at once. It was amusing to see the King walk about with a band of music in front, and a crowd behind, led by some fifty gentlemen in black tailed coats and white ties, keeping up an incessant fire of *vivas* and laudatory comments. First, we all went to a little church and held huge tapers while prayers were going on, for it was now dark; and then the King visited a hospital (where he was much entertained at finding only two patients), and other establishments, while we stayed on the plaza to see the fireworks and illuminations, and all the beauty and fashion of the place parading up and down in front of the Ayuntamiento. There

was generally a grand civic banquet given to the King on his arrival at each town, and Avilez, of course, offered no exception to this rule. His Majesty occupied the house of the father of the deputy to the Cortes, and in front of it a large crowd stationed itself permanently around the band which played incessantly. Music, rockets, and gay-coloured lamps, do in fact form the staple elements of these demonstrations. We were lodged in the house of a worthy city dignitary, who combined with his municipal functions the honours of dramatic authorship, and I thus became possessed of a complete set of his works; while I observed, as the King passed under his balcony on his way to embark, that my kind host was showering upon him handfuls of poems printed on bright-coloured paper, and written expressly for the occasion. From this excellent citizen I learnt that the annual trade with Cuba was carried on by nine brigs and three ships; that a considerable exportation of nuts took place to England; and that there were coal, iron, zinc and copper mines in the vicinity, but that the development of the local resources of the place was paralysed by the absence of any good port. Avilez is celebrated in history for having given its name to Pedro the Cruel, who resided in a house which may still be seen; while among the Casas Solares, those of the Marquis Sangrado and the Marquis St. Iago are the most worth seeing. The port is situated three miles up a river, whose marshy banks are dry at low water, and is spanned by a quaint old bridge with lofty centre arches, where the navigation ceases. A large crowd of gayly-dressed boats was waiting to accompany the royal barge; the few craft lying in the little dock put on their brightest

attire; and amid the usual saluting the aquatic procession moved off, quite Venetian in its character, and in pleasing contrast to our former experiences. Our little flotilla, consisting of some twenty or thirty boats, many of them full of ladies, was an hour in reaching the mouth of the river, passing through charming scenery to the establishment of St. Juan, where the King was expected to land in order to visit the zinc-mines, visible three miles distant beneath lofty cliffs on the sea-shore, and connected with this spot by a tramway. Unfortunately tide waits for no man, and there was still a shallow bar to be crossed, so a disappointment on all sides was inevitable. These zinc-mines are worth seeing, and extend for some distance beneath the bed of the ocean. The tender in which we embarked for the Vittoria was lying under a lofty promontory against which the Atlantic waves were beating, making hollow echoes in its cavernous recesses. A lighthouse, crowds of gaily-dressed ladies, and the inevitable band, which had managed to scramble up to its summit in time, gave quite a soft and comfortable character to this wild and inhospitable crag, until the strains of music and the waving of handkerchiefs faded from hearing and from vision. We joined the Vittoria off Gijon after a somewhat rough three hours' passage, and the same evening got under way for Ferrol, which, owing to the extreme narrowness of the entry and the hazy weather by which we were baffled, we did not reach until four on the following afternoon. The narrow channel by which this splendid land-locked harbour is approached is singularly striking at one point, where in old times a chain stretched across it used to bar its entrance. Here a biscuit might be thrown ashore on either side from the deck

of the frigate. The huge iron rings to which this chain was attached are still visible. Steep barren hillsides fall precipitously on the right and left of the water's edge; a couple of batteries facing each other guard the entrance. Only one of these seemed garrisoned, and belched out its volleys of salutes as we approached. But the most cheering and exciting sight to British eyes, as we slowly turned the point, and the whole extent of the harbour opened up before us, was the Mediterranean fleet, under the command of Sir Hastings Yelverton, waiting to receive us. Here were the Lord Warden, Caledonia, Swiftsure, Pallas, and Research, ironclads—and Aurora and Helicon, wooden ships—anchored in two lines, with yards manned, lying motionless and silent until we should have got well into their midst before thundering out their welcome. The presence of our own fleet somewhat disturbed our doing Ferrol as conscientious sight-seers. Whether it was that ironclads, owing to their construction, offer a greater magnetic attraction than narrow Spanish streets, or that there was really nothing to see on shore, I know not, but we decidedly neglected Ferrol and found ourselves more than compensated by the generous hospitality we received on board the British flag-ship for so doing. The two following days were spent in an unwearied round of festivities and salutes. The King entertained the Admiral and twenty of the officers of the squadron on shore; and the Admiral gave a return banquet on the following night to his Majesty and the numerous staff of officers and gentlemen who were accompanying him, following it up afterwards with an illumination of the fleet and some experiments in night-signals. Then the King paid a visit by day to the flag-ship, going carefully over her;

and watching the men put through their gunnery-exercise. The naval members of his staff seemed dazzled by the whiteness of her decks, overwhelming the first lieutenant, Mr. Paget, with compliments, and expressed their undisguised wonder and admiration at the perfection of all her arrangements. His Majesty afterwards visited the new ironclad *Swiftsure*, where Captain Ward explained to him the peculiar character and advantages of her style of armament.

The following morning the Admiral and a large party accompanied His Majesty over Ferrol dockyard, which bears a desolate, mournful aspect of poverty and decay. The arrangements are excellent and the machinery in good order; the misfortune is that there is no money to work it, and that, as at Turbia, a great reduction of workmen has become inevitable. The difficulty of paying the wages of those that remain is so great, that fifteen months' wages were due a short time prior to our visit, which probably would not have been so agreeable, had not £80,000 been spent in satisfying the men. For this reason an ironclad now upon the stocks at Ferrol cannot be completed. The population of the town consists mainly of Government *employees*, or of those connected in some way with the establishment. It contains about 10,000 inhabitants, but though imposing-looking on account of its magnificent situation, is really dull and uninteresting. It was prettily decorated and illuminated, but was too official to be valuable as an indication of public feeling. One of the pleasantest episodes of our stay here was a cruise round the basin in the steam-pinnacle of the *Swiftsure*, arriving back off the town in time to see a boat regatta, in which the men of our fleet took

part, but were not put into any race against Spanish boats' crews.

It had been arranged that the British fleet was to accompany his Majesty from Ferrol to Corunna, a distance of twelve miles, the royal frigate leading. The spacious harbour admitted of a very pretty and skillfully-executed evolution, which enabled the English squadron, while the *Vittoria* was getting under way, to come into line behind her. The Lord Warden, under the able handling of Captain Brandreth, led the way up the harbour, past the town and ramparts, crowded apparently with the whole male and female population, and, sweeping round in little more than her own length, was followed by the whole fleet in succession, the little *Helicon* bringing up the rear, each ship making the sharp turn with perfect precision. The *Vittoria* at this moment opportunely getting under way, the curved line gradually straightened out, and the whole fleet stood majestically out to sea, amid the booming of cannon from the shore, and the explosion in the air of innumerable rockets. The eagerness of the people to witness so unusual and magnificent a sight very nearly resulted in an accident. A steam-launch, full of ladies, towing another boat, absorbed in contemplation of the *Vittoria*, and miscalculating apparently their speed and distance, got suddenly across the bows of the Lord Warden, and only escaped being crushed by a miracle. As it was, the women screamed, and several of the men, thinking immediate annihilation inevitable, jumped overboard. They all scrambled back into the boat on seeing her remain uninjured; but one got sucked under the Lord Warden, and disappeared for so long that we thought he was drowned, when he came to the surface a long way astern. Meanwhile life-buoys

were thrown overboard, a cutter lowered in less than a minute, and pulling towards the receding head, which threatened every moment to sink for ever. The man, however, made a gallant struggle for life, and was picked up by a shore-boat in an exhausted condition just as the Lord Warden's cutter had reached him. This incident took place in the throat of the channel, and a few minutes later saw us clear of the entrance, and steaming across the mouth of the gulf, at the head of which Betanzos is situated, and on the opposite shore of which the town of Corunna was already visible; and in an hour more we received the salutes of the old castle of St. Anton and the fort, picturesquely situated on the rocky island of Santa Cruz, which guards the entrance. Here we soon received evidence that the reception was to be a cordial one. The ships in the harbour were dressed, the pier festooned, and abundantly decorated with foliage, flags, and triumphal arches, and crowded with people. Corunna is situated on a promontory. The old town, surrounded by a sea-wall, contains the Ayuntamiento and municipal buildings, and the spot interesting to Englishmen, the tomb of Sir John Moore, a whitewashed granite monument in the centre of a grotesquely-arranged garden—the whole kept up at the expense of the British Government, and completely in accordance with the taste which at present distinguishes the Board of Works. The streets of the old town bear witness of an age not very remote, when wheeled vehicles were unknown in these parts, for none of them are evidently intended for anything but foot-passengers. They are flagged with broad paving-stones, and are generally too steep and narrow to drive over. A broad open space and terrace separate the

quaint old town, with its decaying battlements and its very ancient churches, from the modern quarter, and from the highest part of the ridge, where an immense barrack, constructed at an expense of £220,000 by O'Donnell, is situated. A view is obtained over the Atlantic in one direction, and over the harbour in the other. This receptacle for troops possesses the additional advantage of completely commanding the town in case of revolution. The houses on the quay present a really handsome but somewhat peculiar appearance from the sea, as the balconies with which they are faced from top to bottom are all shut in with glass, thus giving them the appearance of a row of lofty conservatories. The capital of the province of Galicia, Corunna, contains a population of nearly 30,000 inhabitants, and is deriving a considerable increase to its material prosperity from the large quantities of cattle which are transported to England by steamers especially constructed for the purpose. This trade, which has only sprung into existence during the last ten years, is acquiring a rapid extension both here and at Vigo, and is likely to prove a source of great pecuniary benefit to the peasantry. The cattle are not reared in large droves, but are purchased singly, or by twos and threes, from the small peasant owners by the agents at the seaports. Every branch of rural industry is so antiquated and backward, and the country people are so bigoted, and wedded to the habits and customs of their ancestors, that farming speculations on modern principles might prove a good investment where land and labour are so cheap and a market so accessible as that of England. One of the most interesting historical features of Corunna is its lighthouse; which rises to a height of 363 feet

above the sea, and is visible for 12 miles. It is supposed to be the successor of similar edifices which go back to the time of the Phœnicians, and from which the town takes its arms, and some think its name. These former consist of the lighthouse, a lamp, a skull and cross-bones, and eight scallops, in honour of St. Jago. To the Englishman the town possesses an especial historical interest not only as being the scene of Sir John Moore's victory, but the port in which the Spanish Armada refitted. There was a grand banquet given here to the King by the captain-general of the province, to which the Admiral and officers of the fleet were invited, and boxes were provided afterwards for the whole party at the theatre, to which we all adjourned, and found a brilliantly-filled house. At all events, whatever might be the secret sentiments of the better classes, they could not conceal their curiosity, but turned out in gaily-dressed crowds to gaze at his Majesty as he entered the royal box, and to applaud him vigorously. The ladies were pretty and well dressed; and the plan of having tiers of open balconies instead of boxes showed them off to advantage, while it added much to the gaiety and brilliancy of the house. The fact is, however, that Corunna is largely Republican; and the mayor took advantage of the occasion to read a most insulting address to the King, to which his Majesty deigned no reply. Our expedition was now drawing to its close. On the following day the whole fleet got under way: the English squadron, formed into two lines, accompanied the Vittoria out to sea, and then, with final salutes on both sides, and ringing cheers from the strong-chested British tars, we sped on our separate ways,—the fleet to cruise for a week, and

then put in to Vigo; and we to return to Santander, from which place the King proposed, without delay, to take the rail for Madrid, so as to arrive in the capital before the day of the elections. It is a twenty-four hours' voyage from Corunna to Santander; but a fair wind and lovely weather enabled us to accomplish it in a little less, and to land at the charming little watering place of Sardinero, situated just outside the mouth of the harbour, in time for dinner. Here the King took possession of the house in which he had already passed a fortnight, and the whole gay world of Santander came flocking in little three-muled omnibuses, something like Irish jaunting-cars, to pay their respects to his Majesty, who had already made himself popular among them. Still, here as elsewhere in the Basque Provinces, the population is divided between Republicans and Carlists, and the strength of the monarchical and constitutional party lies in the fact, that they are midway between those two opposing extremes. Our ironclad home had now done its work, and we watched the Vittoria steam away to join the Spanish fleet at the Balearic Islands. The finest frigate in the Spanish navy, she was built by Admiral, then Captain, Beranger, who lived in England for four years to superintend her construction. This talented officer was one of the first to "pronounce" against Queen Isabella, two years ago, in the harbour of Cadiz, and is now an Admiral and the Minister of Marine of the present Government. He accompanied the King throughout the tour in his official capacity; while Señor Montero Rios, the Minister of Grace and Justice, also joined the party for a day or two at Corunna. One of the most interesting members of the suite was General Burgos, the aide-de-camp who was

in the carriage with the King and Queen upon the occasion of the late attempt on their lives, and who, instantly rising up and pressing the Queen down in front of him, interposed his bulky form between their Majesties and the fusilade to which throughout the whole length of the narrow street they were subjected. The gallantry of this officer was only equalled by the perfect coolness exhibited by the King, who, indeed, "made his proofs," as the French say, at Custozza, when he held a position for an hour and a half under a withering fire, losing eight hundred men out of his brigade, and refusing himself to be removed from the front, although lying dangerously wounded by a ball through his body, until he received the order to retire.

The simultaneous departure of the King and the frigate restored the charming little watering-place of Sardinero, in which I am writing this, to its tranquil and accustomed habits. It is only within the last two years that the hygienic advantages and bathing attractions of this romantic bit of coast have begun to force themselves upon the public; but there can be little doubt that Sardinero is destined to become the most frequented watering-place on the north coast of Spain, as it certainly is the most desirable as a residence. Separated from the town of Santander, from which it is distant about two miles, by a rocky isthmus, the road thither is a never-ending pleasure, from the magnificent points of view which it affords over the town itself; the spacious harbor, well stocked with shipping; the lofty mountain-ranges rising in precipitous and confused masses into the clouds, shutting in the prospect on the one side, while on the other stretches the abrupt and rugged coast-line, with its bold massive headlands, enclosing here and

there sandy bays, at the head of one of which lies Sardinero, consisting at present of a casino, two or three hotels, and half-a-dozen villas. There is a constant omnibus communication kept up with Santander; and twice a-week the band plays, and draws the gay world from that town to the little promenade that overlooks the bathing establishment. Here the upper classes disport themselves in the waves, into which are buoyed out ropes for their safety; while the neighbouring bay, separated from this one by a rocky promontory, is devoted to the peasantry, who flock to their baths in great quantities every afternoon, and perform their toilets on the sea-beach with the utmost *nonchalance*, trooping into the water in large parties of twenty at a time, and generally holding hands, in gossamer costumes of old under-garments. It is curious to watch them the moment they touch the water, dipping their hands in it and crossing themselves reverently as a protection against the treachery of the waves. But the pleasantest way of bathing here is to choose your own cavern in some sequestered corner of the rocks as your dressing-room, and plunge into the Atlantic out of sight of the bathing world. Although so far south, the climate is much cooler and more bracing in summer than in many French watering-places; while salmon and trout fishing amidst the most magnificent scenery, abounding in picturesque villages and small towns, where insects swarm and the food is rank with oil, form a combination of sweet and bitter which not inaptly illustrates the same mixture in an average human existence. Santander itself is a thriving seaport town containing some 25,000 inhabitants, the capital of the province, and an active political centre. At the elections, which have just

taken place, the Radical candidate was elected without opposition; while, in September 1870, it was one of the first towns in Spain to pronounce against the late Queen, and got itself into trouble in consequence; for General Calonge, whose name is familiar to English ears in connection with the detention of the crew of an English merchant-ship, advanced upon the place with 4000 men, and after a short resistance on the part of the inhabitants, who defended their barricades after the feeble fashion of modern revolutionists both in this country and

France, recaptured it, the town losing altogether about twenty killed and wounded, and inflicting considerable loss upon the Queen's troops as they entered by firing upon them from the windows. The triumph of Calonge was of short duration, for Isabella's flight involved his own, and the town recovered its liberties and is now, together with the rest of Spain, only awaiting the moment when it may prove, by making another revolution, that it understands how to use them.



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THE PARISIANS.

BOOK SECOND.—CHAPTER I.

It is several weeks after the date of the last chapter; the lime-trees in the Tuileries are clothed in green.

In a somewhat spacious apartment on the ground-floor in the quiet locality of the Rue d'Anjou, a man was seated, very still, and evidently absorbed in deep thought, before a writing-table placed close to the window.

Seen thus, there was an expression of great power both of intellect and of character in a face which, in ordinary social commune, might rather be noticeable for an aspect of hardy frankness, suiting well with the clear-cut, handsome profile, and the rich dark auburn hair, waving carelessly over one of those broad open foreheads, which, according to an old writer, seem the "frontispiece of a temple dedicated to Honour."

The forehead, indeed, was the man's most remarkable feature. It could not but prepossess the beholder. When, in private theatricals, he had need to alter the character of his countenance, he did it effectually, merely

by forcing down his hair till it reached his eyebrows. He no longer then looked like the same man.

The person I describe has been already introduced to the reader as Graham Vane. But perhaps this is the fit occasion to enter into some such details as to his parentage and position as may make the introduction more satisfactory and complete.

His father, the representative of a very ancient family, came into possession, after a long minority, of what may be called a fair squire's estate, and about half a million in moneyed investments, inherited on the female side. Both land and money were absolutely at his disposal, unencumbered by entail or settlement. He was a man of a brilliant, irregular genius, of princely generosity, of splendid taste, of a gorgeous kind of pride closely allied to a masculine kind of vanity. As soon as he was of age he began to build, converting his squire's hall into a ducal palace. He then stood for the county; and in days before

the first Reform Bill, when a county election was to the estate of a candidate what a long war is to the debt of a nation. He won the election; he obtained early successes in Parliament. It was said by good authorities in political circles that, if he chose, he might aspire to lead his party, and ultimately to hold the first rank in the government of his country.

That may or may not be true; but certainly he did not choose to take the trouble necessary for such an ambition. He was too fond of pleasure, of luxury, of pomp. He kept a famous stud of racers and hunters. He was a munificent patron of art. His establishments, his entertainments, were on a par with those of the great noble who represented the loftiest (Mr. Vane would not own it to be the eldest) branch of his genealogical tree.

He became indifferent to political contests, indolent in his attendance at the House, speaking seldom, not at great length nor with much preparation, but with power and fire, originality and genius; so that he was not only effective as an orator, but combining with eloquence advantages of birth, person, station, the reputation of patriotic independence, and genial attributes of character, he was an authority of weight in the scales of party.

This gentleman, at the age of forty, married the dowerless daughter of a poor but distinguished naval officer, of a noble family, first cousin to the Duke of Alton.

He settled on her a suitable jointure, but declined to tie up any portion of his property for the benefit of children by the marriage. He declared that so much of his fortune was invested either in mines, the produce of which was extremely fluctuating, or in various funds, over rapid transfers in which it was his amusement and his interest to have control,

unchecked by reference to trustees, that entails and settlements on children were an inconvenience he declined to incur.

Besides, he held notions of his own as to the wisdom of keeping children dependent on their father. "What numbers of young men," said he, "are ruined in character and in fortune by knowing that when their father dies they are certain of the same provision, no matter how they displease him; and in the meanwhile forestalling that provision by recourse to usurers." These arguments might not have prevailed over the bride's father a year or two later, when, by the death of intervening kinsmen, he became Duke of Alton; but in his then circumstances the marriage itself was so much beyond the expectations which the portionless daughter of a sea-captain has the right to form, that Mr. Vane had it all his own way, and he remained absolute master of his whole fortune, save of that part of his landed estate on which his wife's jointure was settled; and even from this encumbrance he was very soon freed. His wife died in the second year of marriage, leaving an only son—Graham. He grieved for her loss with all the passion of an impressionable, ardent, and powerful nature. Then for a while he sought distraction to his sorrow by throwing himself into public life with a devoted energy he had not previously displayed.

His speeches served to bring his party into power, and he yielded, though reluctantly, to the unanimous demand of that party that he should accept one of the highest offices in the new Cabinet. He acquitted himself well as an administrator, but declared, no doubt honestly, that he felt like Sinbad released from the old man on his back, when, a year or two afterwards, he went out of office with his party. No persua-

sions could induce him to come in again; nor did he ever again take a very active part in debate. "No," said he, "I was born to the freedom of a private gentleman—intolerable to me is the thralldom of a public servant. But I will bring up my son so that he may acquit the debt which I decline to pay to my country." There he kept his word. Graham had been carefully educated for public life, the ambition for it dinning into his ear from childhood. In his school-vacations his father made him learn and declaim chosen specimens of masculine oratory; engaged an eminent actor to give him lessons in elocution; bade him frequent theatres, and study there the effect which words derive from looks and gesture; encouraged him to take part himself in private theatricals. To all this the boy lent his mind with delight. He had the orator's inborn temperament; quick, yet imaginative, and loving the sport of rivalry and contest. Being also, in his boyish years, good-humoured and joyous, he was not more a favourite with the masters in the schoolroom than with boys in the playground. Leaving Eton at seventeen, he then entered at Cambridge, and became, in his first term, the most popular speaker at the Union.

But his father cut short his academic career, and decided, for reasons of his own, to place him at once in Diplomacy. He was attached to the Embassy at Paris, and partook of the pleasures and dissipations of that metropolis too keenly to retain much of the sterner ambition to which he had before devoted himself. Becoming one of the spoiled darlings of fashion, there was great danger that his character would relax into the easy grace of the Epicurean, when all such loiterings in the Rose Garden were brought to abrupt close by a rude and terrible change in his fortunes.

His father was killed by a fall from his horse in hunting; and when his affairs were investigated, they were found to be hopelessly involved—apparently the assets would not suffice for the debts. The elder Vane himself was probably not aware of the extent of his liabilities. He had never wanted ready-money to the last. He could always obtain that from a money-lender, or from the sale of his funded investments. But it became obvious, on examining his papers, that he knew at least how impaired would be the heritage he should bequeath to a son whom he idolised. For that reason he had given Graham a profession in diplomacy, and for that reason he had privately applied to the Ministry for the Viceroyalty of India, in the event of its speedy vacancy. He was eminent enough not to anticipate refusal, and with economy in that lucrative post much of his pecuniary difficulties might have been redeemed, and at least an independent provision secured for his son.

Graham, like Alain de Robebriant, allowed no reproach on his father's memory—indeed, with more reason than Alain, for the elder Vane's fortune had at least gone on no mean and frivolous dissipation.

It had lavished itself on encouragement to art—on great objects of public beneficence—on public-spirited aid of political objects; and even in mere selfish enjoyments there was a certain grandeur in his princely hospitalities, in his munificent generosity, in a warm-hearted carelessness for money. No indulgence in petty follies or degrading vices aggravated the offence of the magnificent squanderer.

"Let me look on my loss of fortune as a gain to myself," said Graham, manfully. "Had I been a rich man, my experience of Paris tells me that I should most likely have been a very idle one. Now

that I have no gold, I must dig in myself for iron."

The man to whom he said this was an uncle-in-law—if I may use that phrase—the Right Hon. Richard King, popularly styled "the blameless King."

This gentleman had married the sister of Graham's mother, whose loss in his infancy and boyhood she had tenderly and anxiously sought to supply. It is impossible to conceive a woman more fitted to invite love and reverence than was Lady Janet King, her manners were so sweet and gentle, her whole nature so elevated and pure.

Her father had succeeded to the dukedom when she married Mr. King, and the alliance was not deemed quite suitable. Still it was not one to which the Duke would have been fairly justified in refusing his assent.

Mr. King could not, indeed, boast of noble ancestry, nor was he even a landed proprietor; but he was a not undistinguished member of Parliament, of irreproachable character, and ample fortune inherited from a distant kinsman, who had enriched himself as a merchant. It was on both sides a marriage of love.

It is popularly said that a man uplifts a wife to his own rank; it as often happens that a woman uplifts her husband to the dignity of her own character. Richard King rose greatly in public estimation after his marriage with Lady Janet.

She united to a sincere piety a very active and a very enlightened benevolence. She guided his ambition aside from mere party politics into subjects of social and religious interest, and in devoting himself to these he achieved a position more popular and more respected than he could ever have won in the strife of party.

When the Government of which

the elder Vane became a leading Minister was formed, it was considered a great object to secure a name so high in the religious world, so beloved by the working classes, as that of Richard King; and he accepted one of those places which, though not in the Cabinet, confers the rank of Privy Councillor.

When that brief-lived Administration ceased, he felt the same sensation of relief that Vane had felt, and came to the same resolution never again to accept office, but from different reasons, all of which need not now be detailed. Amongst them, however, certainly this:—He was exceedingly sensitive to opinion, thin-skinned as to abuse, and very tenacious of the respect due to his peculiar character of sanctity and philanthropy. He writhed under every newspaper article that had made "the blameless King" responsible for the iniquities of the Government to which he belonged. In the loss of office he seemed to recover his former throne.

Mr. King heard Graham's resolution with a grave approving smile, and his interest in the young man became greatly increased. He devoted himself strenuously to the object of saving to Graham some wrecks of his paternal fortunes, and having a clear head and great experience in the transaction of business, he succeeded beyond the most sanguine expectations formed by the family solicitor. A rich manufacturer was found to purchase at a fancy price the bulk of the estate with the palatial mansion, which the estate alone could never have sufficed to maintain with suitable establishments.

So that when all debts were paid, Graham found himself in possession of a clear income of about £500 a-year, invested in a mortgage secured on a part of the hereditary

lands, on which was seated an old hunting-lodge bought by a brewer.

With this portion of the property Graham parted very reluctantly. It was situated amid the most picturesque scenery on the estate, and the lodge itself was a remnant of the original residence of his ancestors before it had been abandoned for that which, built in the reign of Elizabeth, had been expanded into a Trentham-like palace by the last owner.

But Mr. King's argument reconciled him to the sacrifice. "I can manage," said the prudent adviser, "if you insist on it, to retain that remnant of the hereditary estate which you are so loath to part with. But how? by mortgaging it to an extent that will scarcely leave you £50 a-year net from the rents. This is not all. Your mind will then be distracted from the large object of a career to the small object of retaining a few family acres; you will be constantly hampered by private anxieties and fears: you could do nothing for the benefit of those around you—could not repair a farmhouse for a better class of tenant—could not rebuild a labourer's dilapidated cottage. Give up an idea that might be very well for a man whose sole ambition was to remain a squire, however beggarly. Launch yourself into the larger world of metropolitan life with energies wholly unshackled, a mind wholly undisturbed, and secure of an income which, however modest, is equal to that of most young men who enter that world as your equals."

Graham was convinced, and yielded, though with a bitter pang. It is hard for a man whose fathers have lived on the soil to give up all trace of their whereabouts. But none saw in him any morbid consciousness of change of fortune, when, a year after his father's

death, he reassumed his place in society. If before courted for his expectations, he was still courted for himself; by many of the great who had loved his father, perhaps even courted more.

He resigned the diplomatic career, not merely because the rise in that profession is slow, and in the intermediate steps the chances of distinction are slight and few, but more because he desired to cast his lot in the home country, and regarded the courts of other lands as exile.

It was not true, however, as Le-mercier had stated on report, that he lived on his pen. Curbing all his old extravagant tastes, £500 a-year amply supplied his wants. But he had by his pen gained distinction, and created great belief in his abilities for a public career. He had written critical articles, read with much praise, in periodicals of authority, and had published one or two essays on political questions, which had created yet more sensation. It was only the graver literature, connected more or less with his ultimate object of a public career, in which he had thus evinced his talents of composition. Such writings were not of a nature to bring him much money, but they gave him a definite and solid station. In the old time, before the first Reform Bill, his reputation would have secured him at once a seat in Parliament; but the ancient nurseries of statesmen are gone, and their place is not supplied.

He had been invited, however, to stand for more than one large and populous borough, with very fair prospects of success; and whatever the expense, Mr. King had offered to defray it. But Graham would not have incurred the latter obligation; and when he learned the pledges which his supporters would have exacted, he would not have

stood if success had been certain and the cost nothing. "I cannot," he said to his friends, "go into the consideration of what is best for the country with my thoughts manacled; and I cannot be both representative and slave of the greatest ignorance of the greatest number. I bide my time, and meanwhile I prefer to write as I please, rather than vote as I don't please."

Three years went by, passed chiefly in England, partly in travel; and at the age of thirty Graham Vane was still one of those of whom admirers say, "He will be a great man some day;" and detractors reply, "Some day seems a long way off."

The same fastidiousness which had operated against that entrance into Parliament to which his ambition not the less steadily adapted itself, had kept him free from the perils of wedlock. In his heart he yearned for love and domestic life, but he had hitherto met with no one who realised the ideal he had formed. With his person, his accomplishments, his connections, and his repute, he might have made many an advantageous marriage. But somehow or other the charm vanished from a fair face, if the shadow of a money-bag fell on it; on the other hand, his ambition occupied so large a share in his thoughts that he would have fled in time from the temptation of a marriage that would have over-weighted him beyond the chance of rising. Added to all, he desired in a wife an intellect that, if not equal to his own, could become so by sympathy—a union of high culture and noble aspiration, and yet of loving womanly sweetness which a man seldom finds out of books; and when he does find it, perhaps it does not wear the sort of face that he fancies. Be that as it may, Graham was still unmarried and heart-whole.

And now a new change in his life befell him. Lady Janet died of a fever contracted in her habitual rounds of charity among the houses of the poor. She had been to him as the most tender mother, and a lovelier soul than hers never alighted on the earth. His grief was intense; but what was her husband's?—one of those griefs that kill.

To the side of Richard King his Janet had been as the guardian angel. His love for her was almost worship—with her, every object in a life hitherto so active and useful seemed gone. He evinced no noisy passion of sorrow. He shut himself up, and refused to see even Graham. But after some weeks had passed, he admitted the clergyman in whom, on spiritual matters, he habitually confided, and seemed consoled by the visits; then he sent for his lawyer, and made his will; after which he allowed Graham to call on him daily, on the condition that there should be no reference to his loss. He spoke to the young man on other subjects, rather drawing him out about himself, sounding his opinion on various grave matters, watching his face while he questioned, as if seeking to dive into his heart, and sometimes pathetically sinking into silence, broken but by sighs. So it went on for a few more weeks; then he took the advice of his physician to seek change of air and scene. He went away alone, without even a servant, not leaving word where he had gone. After a little while he returned, more ailing, more broken than before. One morning he was found insensible—stricken by paralysis. He regained consciousness, and even for some days rallied strength. He might have recovered, but he seemed as if he tacitly refused to live. He expired at last, peacefully, in Graham's arms.

At the opening of his will, it was

found that he had left Graham his sole heir and executor. Deducting Government duties, legacies to servants, and donations to public charities, the sum thus bequeathed to his lost wife's nephew was two hundred and twenty thousand pounds.

With such a fortune, opening indeed was made for an ambition so long obstructed. But Graham affected no change in his mode of life; he still retained his modest bachelor's apartments—engaged no servants—bought no horses—in no way exceeded the income he had possessed before. He seemed, indeed, depressed rather than elated by the succession to a wealth which he had never anticipated.

Two children had been born from the marriage of Richard King; they had died young, it is true, but Lady Janet at the time of her own decease was not too advanced in years for the reasonable expectation of other offspring; and even after Richard King became a widower, he had given to Graham no hint of his testamentary dispositions. The young man was no blood-relation to him, and naturally supposed that such relations would become the heirs. But in truth the deceased seemed to have no near relations—none had ever been known to visit him—none raised a voice to question the justice of his will.

Lady Janet had been buried at Kensal Green; her husband's remains were placed in the same vault.

For days and days Graham went his way lonely to the cemetery. He might be seen standing motionless by that tomb, with tears rolling down his cheeks; yet his was not a weak nature—not one of those that love indulgence of irremediable grief. On the contrary, people who did not know him well said "that he had more head than heart," and the

character of his pursuits, as of his writings, was certainly not that of a sentimentalist. He had not thus visited the tomb till Richard King had been placed within it. Yet his love for his aunt was unspeakably greater than that which he could have felt for her husband. Was it, then, the husband that he so much more acutely mourned; or was there something that, since the husband's death, had deepened his reverence for the memory of her whom he had not only loved as a mother, but honoured as a saint?

These visits to the cemetery did not cease till Graham was confined to his bed by a very grave illness—the only one he had ever known. His physician said it was nervous fever, and occasioned by moral shock or excitement; it was attended with delirium. His recovery was slow, and when it was sufficiently completed he quitted England; and we find him now, with his mind composed, his strength restored, and his spirits braced, in that gay city of Paris, hiding, perhaps, some earnest purpose amidst his participation in its holiday enjoyments.

He is now, as I have said, seated before his writing-table in deep thought. He takes up a letter which he had already glanced over hastily, and reperuses it with more care.

The letter is from his cousin, the Duke of Alton, who had succeeded a few years since to the family honours—an able man, with no small degree of information, an ardent politician, but of very rational and temperate opinions; too much occupied by the cares of a princely estate to covet office for himself; too sincere a patriot not to desire office for those to whose hands he thought the country might be most safely intrusted—an intimate friend of Graham's. The contents of the letter are these:—

MY DEAR GRAHAM,—I trust that you will welcome the brilliant opening into public life which these lines are intended to announce to you. Vavasour has just been with me to say that he intends to resign his seat for the county when Parliament meets, and agreeing with me that there is no one so fit to succeed him as yourself, he suggests the keeping his intention secret until you have arranged your committee and are prepared to take the field. You cannot hope to escape a contest; but I have examined the Register, and the party has gained rather than lost since the last election, when Vavasour was so triumphantly returned.

The expenses for this county, where there are so many out-voters to bring up, and so many agents to retain, are always large in comparison with some other counties; but that consideration is all in your favour, for it deters Squire Hunston, the only man who could beat you, from starting; and to your resources a thousand pounds more or less are a trifle not worth discussing. You know how difficult it is nowadays to find a seat for a man of moderate opinions like yours and mine. Our county would exactly suit you. The constituency is so evenly divided between the urban and rural populations, that its representative must fairly consult the interests of both. He can be neither an ultra-Tory nor a violent Radical. He is left to the enviable freedom, to which you say you aspire, of considering what is best for the country as a whole.

Do not lose so rare an opportunity. There is but one drawback to your triumphant candidature. It will be said that you have no longer an acre in the county in which the Vanes have been settled so long. That drawback can be removed. It is true that you can never hope to buy back the estates

which you were compelled to sell at your father's death—the old manufacturer gripes them too firmly to loosen his hold; and after all, even were your income double what it is, you would be overhoused in the vast pile in which your father buried so large a share of his fortune. But that beautiful old hunting-lodge, the *Stamm Schloss* of your family, with the adjacent farms, can be now repurchased very reasonably. The brewer who bought them is afflicted with an extravagant son, whom he placed in the — Hussars, and will gladly sell the property for £5000 more than he gave: well worth the difference, as he has improved the farm-buildings and raised the rental. I think, in addition to the sum you have on mortgage, £23,000 will be accepted, and as a mere investment pay you nearly three per cent. But to you it is worth more than double the money; it once more identifies your ancient name with the county. You would be a greater personage with that moderate holding in the district in which your race took root, and on which your father's genius threw such a lustre, than you would be if you invested all your wealth in a county in which every squire and farmer would call you "the new man." Pray think over this most seriously, and instruct your solicitor to open negotiations with the brewer at once. But rather put yourself into the train, and come back to England straight to me. I will ask Vavasour to meet you. What news from Paris? Is the Emperor as ill as the papers insinuate? And is the revolutionary party gaining ground?—Your affectionate cousin,

ALTON.

As he put down this letter, Graham heaved a short impatient sigh.

"The old *Stamm Schloss*," he muttered—"a foot on the old soil once more! and an entrance into the great arena with hands unfettered. Is it possible!—is it—is it?"

At this moment the door-bell of the apartment rang, and a servant whom Graham had hired at Paris as a *laquais de place* announced "*Ce Monsieur*."

Graham hurried the letter into his portfolio, and said, "You mean the person to whom I am always at home?"

"The same, Monsieur."

"Admit him, of course."

There entered a wonderfully thin man, middle-aged, clothed in black, his face cleanly shaven, his hair cut very short, with one of those faces which, to use a French expression, say "nothing." It was absolutely without expression—it had not even, despite its thinness, one salient feature. If you had found yourself anywhere seated next to that man, your eye would have passed him over as too insignificant to notice; if at a *café*, you would have gone on talking to your friend without lowering your voice. What mattered it whether a *bête* like that overheard or not? Had you been asked to guess his calling and station, you might have said, minutely observing the freshness of his clothes and the undeniable respectability of his *tout ensemble*, "He must be well off, and with no care for customers on his mind—a *ci-devant* chandler who has retired on a legacy."

Graham rose at the entrance of his visitor, motioned him courteously to a seat beside him, and waiting till the *laquais* had vanished, then asked "What news?"

"None, I fear, that will satisfy Monsieur. I have certainly hunted out, since I had lost the honour to see you, no less than four ladies of the name of Duval, but only one of

them took that name from her parents, and was also christened Louise."

"Ah—Louise!"

"Yes, the daughter of a perfumer, aged twenty-eight. She, therefore, is not the Louise you seek. Permit me to refer to your instructions." Here M. Renard took out a note-book, turned over the leaves, and resumed—"Wanted, Louise Duval, daughter of Auguste Duval, a French drawing-master, who lived for many years at Tours, removed to Paris in 1845, lived at No. 12 Rue de S— at Paris for some years, but afterwards moved to a different *quartier* of the town, and died, 1848, in Rue L—, No. 89. Shortly after his death, his daughter Louise left that lodging, and could not be traced. In 1849 official documents reporting her death were forwarded from Munich to a person (a friend of yours, Monsieur). Death, of course, taken for granted; but nearly five years afterwards, this very person encountered the said Louise Duval at Aix-la-Chapelle, and never heard nor saw more of her. *Demande* submitted, to find out said Louise Duval or any children of hers born in 1848-9; supposed in 1852-3 to have one child, a girl, between four and five years old. Is that right, Monsieur?"

"Quite right."

"And this is the whole information given to me. Monsieur on giving it asked me if I thought it desirable that he should commence inquiries at Aix-la-Chapelle, where Louise Duval was last seen by the person interested to discover her. I reply, No; pains thrown away. Aix-la-Chapelle is not a place where any Frenchwoman not settled there by marriage would remain. Nor does it seem probable that the said Duval would venture to select for her residence Munich, a city in which she had contrived to obtain certifi-

cates of her death. A Frenchwoman who has once known Paris always wants to get back to it; especially, Monsieur, if she has the beauty which you assign to this lady. I therefore suggested that our inquiries should commence in this capital. Monsieur agreed with me, and I did not grudge the time necessary for investigation."

"You were most obliging. Still I am beginning to be impatient if time is to be thrown away."

"Naturally. Permit me to return to my notes. Monsieur informs me that twenty-one years ago, in 1848, the Parisian police were instructed to find out this lady and failed, but gave hopes of discovering her through her relations. He asks me to refer to our archives; I tell him that is no use. However, in order to oblige him, I do so. No trace of such inquiry—it must have been, as Monsieur led me to suppose, a strictly private one, unconnected with crime or with politics; and as I have the honour to tell Monsieur, no record of such investigations is preserved in the Rue Jerusalem. Great scandal would there be, and injury to the peace of families, if we preserved the results of private inquiries intrusted to us—by absurdly jealous husbands, for instance. Honour, Monsieur, honour forbids it. Next I suggest to Monsieur that his simplest plan would be an advertisement in the French journals, stating, if I understand him right, that it is for the pecuniary interest of Madame or Mademoiselle Duval, daughter of Auguste Duval, *artiste en dessin*, to come forward. Monsieur objects to that."

"I object to it extremely; as I have told you, this is a strictly confidential inquiry, and an advertisement, which in all likelihood would be practically useless (it proved to be so in a former inquiry), would not be resorted to unless all else

failed, and even then with reluctance."

"Quite so. Accordingly, Monsieur delegates to me, who have been recommended to him as the best person he can employ in that department of our police which is not connected with crime or political *surveillance*, a task the most difficult. I have, through strictly private investigations, to discover the address and prove the identity of a lady bearing a name among the most common in France, and of whom nothing has been heard for fifteen years, and then at so migratory an *endroit* as Aix-la-Chapelle. You will not or cannot inform me if since that time the lady has changed her name by marriage."

"I have no reason to think that she has; and there are reasons against the supposition that she married after 1849."

"Permit me to observe that the more details of information Monsieur can give me, the easier my task of research will be."

"I have given you all the details I can, and, aware of the difficulty of tracing a person with a name so much the reverse of singular, I adopted your advice in our first interview, of asking some Parisian friend of mine, with a large acquaintance in the miscellaneous societies of your capital, to inform me of any ladies of that name whom he might chance to encounter; and he, like you, has lighted upon one or two, who, alas! resemble the right one in name, and nothing more."

"You will do wisely to keep him on the watch as well as myself. If it were but a murderess or a political incendiary, then you might trust exclusively to the enlightenment of our *corps*, but this seems an affair of sentiment, Monsieur. Sentiment is not in our way. *Send* the trace of that to the *pleasure*."

M. Renard, having thus poetically delivered himself of that philosophical dogma, rose to depart.

Graham slipped into his hand a bank-note of sufficient value to justify the profound bow he received in return.

When M. Renard had gone, Graham heaved another impatient sigh, and said to himself, "No, it is not possible—at least not yet."

Then, compressing his lips as a man who forces himself to something he dislikes, he dipped his pen into the inkstand; and wrote rapidly thus to his kinsman:—

MY DEAR COUSIN,—I lose not a post in replying to your kind and considerate letter. It is not in my power at present to return to England. I need not say how fondly I cherish the hope of representing the dear old county some day. If

Vavasour could be induced to defer his resignation of the seat for another session, or at least for six or seven months, why then I might be free to avail myself of the opening; at present I am not. Meanwhile I am sorely tempted to buy back the old Lodge—probably the brewer would allow me to leave on mortgage the sum I myself have on the property and a few additional thousands. I have reasons for not wishing to transfer at present much of the money now invested in the funds. I will consider this point, which probably does not press.

I reserve all Paris news till my next; and begging you to forgive so curt and unsatisfactory a reply to a letter so important that it excites me more than I like to own, believe me, your affectionate friend and cousin,

GRAHAM.

CHAPTER II.

At about the same hour on the same day in which the Englishman held the conference with the Parisian detective just related, the Marquis de Rochebriant found himself by appointment in the *cabinet d'affaires* of his *avoué* M. Gandrin: that gentleman had hitherto not found time to give him a definitive opinion as to the case submitted to his judgment. The *avoué* received Alain with a kind of forced civility, in which the natural intelligence of the Marquis, despite his inexperience of life, discovered embarrassment.

"*Monsieur le Marquis*," said Gandrin, fidgeting among the papers on his bureau, "this is a very complicated business. I have given not only my best attention to it, but to your general interests. To be plain, your estate, though a fine one, is fearfully encumbered—fearfully—frightfully."

"Sir," said the Marquis, haughtily, "that is a fact which was never disguised from you."

"I do not say that it was, Marquis; but I scarcely realised the amount of the liabilities nor the nature of the property. It will be difficult—nay, I fear, impossible—to find any capitalist to advance a sum that will cover the mortgages at an interest less than you now pay. As for a Company to take the whole trouble off your hands, clear off the mortgages, manage the forests, develop the fisheries, guarantee you an adequate income, and at the end of twenty-one years or so render up to you or your heirs the free enjoyment of an estate thus improved, we must dismiss that prospect as a wild dream of my good friend M. Hébert's. People in the provinces do dream; in Paris everybody is wide awake."

"Monsieur," said the Marquis, with that inborn imperturbable loftiness of *sang froid* which has always in adverse circumstances characterized the French *noblesse*, "be kind enough to restore my papers. I see that you are not the man for me. Allow me only to thank you, and inquire the amount of my debt for the trouble I have given."

"Perhaps you are quite justified in thinking I am not the man for you, *Monsieur le Marquis*; and your papers shall, if you decide on dismissing me, be returned to you this evening. But as to my accepting remuneration where I have rendered no service, I request *M. le Marquis* to put that out of the question. Considering myself, then, no longer your *avoué*, do not think I take too great a liberty in volunteering my counsel as a friend—or a friend at least to M. Hébert, if you do not vouchsafe my right so to address yourself."

M. Gandrin spoke with a certain dignity of voice and manner which touched and softened his listener.

"You make me you debtor far more than I pretend to repay," replied Alain. "Heaven knows I want a friend, and I will heed with gratitude and respect all your counsels in that character."

"Plainly and briefly, my advice is this: *Monsieur Louvier* is the principal mortgagee. He is among the six richest negotiators of Paris. He does not, therefore, want money, but, like most self-made men, he is very accessible to social vanities. He would be proud to think he had rendered a service to a *Rochebriant*. Approach him, either through me, or, far better, at once introduce yourself, and propose to consolidate all your other liabilities in one mortgage to him, at a rate of interest lower than that which is now paid to some of the small mortgagees. This would add considerably to

your income, and would carry out M. Hébert's advice."

"But does it not strike you, dear M. Gandrin, that such going cap-in-hand to one who has power over my fate, while I have none over his, would scarcely be consistent with my self-respect, not as *Rochebriant* only, but as Frenchman?"

"It does not strike me so in the least; at all events, I could make the proposal on your behalf, without compromising yourself, though I should be far more sanguine of success if you addressed M. Louvier in person."

"I should nevertheless prefer leaving it in your hands; but even for that I must take a few days to consider. Of all the mortgagees M. Louvier has been hitherto the severest and most menacing, the one whom Hébert dreads the most; and should he become sole mortgagee, my whole estate would pass to him if, through any succession of bad seasons and failing tenants, the interest was not punctually paid."

"It could so pass to him now."

"No; for there have been years in which the other mortgagees, who are Bretons, and would be loath to ruin a *Rochebriant*, have been lenient and patient."

"If Louvier has not been equally so, it is only because he knew nothing of you, and your father no doubt had often sorely tasked his endurance. Come, suppose we manage to break the ice easily. Do me the honour to dine here to meet him; you will find that he is not an unpleasant man."

The Marquis hesitated, but the thought of the sharp and seemingly hopeless struggle for the retention of his ancestral home to which he would be doomed if he returned from Paris unsuccessful in his errand overmastered his pride. He felt as if that self-conquest was a duty he owed to the very tombs of

his fathers. "I ought not to shrink from the face of a creditor," said he, smiling somewhat sadly, "and I accept the proposal you so graciously make."

"You do well, Marquis, and I will write at once to Louvier to ask him to give me his first disengaged day."

The Marquis had no sooner quitted the house than M. Gandrin opened a door at the side of his office, and a large portly man strode into the room—stride it was rather than step—firm, self-assured, arrogant, masterful.

"Well, *mon ami*," said this man, taking his stand at the hearth, as a king might take his stand in the hall of his vassal—"and what says our *petit muscadin*?"

"He is neither *petit* nor *muscadin*, Monsieur Louvier," replied Gandrin, peevishly; "and he will task your powers to get him thoroughly into your net. But I have persuaded him to meet you here. What day can you dine with me? I had better ask no one else."

"To-morrow I dine with my friend O—, to meet the chiefs of the Opposition," said Mons. Louvier, with a sort of careless rollicking pomposity. "Thursday with Pereira—Saturday I entertain at home. Say Friday. Your hour?"

"Seven."

"Good! Show me those Roche-

briant papers again; there is something I had forgotten to note. Never mind me. Go on with your work as if I were not here."

Louvier took up the papers, seated himself in an arm-chair by the fireplace, stretched out his legs, and read at his ease, but with a very rapid eye, as a practised lawyer skims through the technical forms of a case to fasten upon the marrow of it.

"Ah! as I thought. The farms could not pay even the interest on my present mortgage; the forests come in for that. If a contractor for the yearly sale of the woods was bankrupt and did not pay, how could I get my interest? Answer me that, Gandrin."

"Certainly you must run the risk of that chance."

"Of course the chance occurs, and then I foreclose*—I seize,—Rochebriant and its *seigneuries* are mine."

As he spoke he laughed, not sardonically—a jovial laugh—and opened wide, to reshut as in a vice, the strong iron hand which had doubtless closed over many a man's all.

"Thanks. On Friday, seven o'clock." He tossed the papers back on the bureau, nodded a royal nod, and strode forth imperiously as he had strided in.

CHAPTER III.

Meanwhile the young Marquis pursued his way thoughtfully through the streets, and entered the Champs Elysées. Since we first, nay, since we last saw him, he is strikingly improved in outward appearances. He has unconsciously acquired more of the easy grace of the Parisian in

gait and bearing. You would no longer detect the provincial—perhaps, however, because he is now dressed, though very simply, in habiliments that belong to the style of the day. Rarely among the loungers in the Champs Elysées could be seen a finer form, a comelier

* For the sake of the general reader, English technical words are here, as elsewhere, substituted as much as possible for French.

face, an air of more unmistakable distinction.

The eyes of many a passing fair one gazed on him admiringly or coquettishly. But he was still so little the true Parisian that they got no smile, no look in return. He was wrapt in his own thoughts; was he thinking of M. Louvier?

He had nearly gained the entrance of the Bois de Boulogne, when he was accosted by a voice behind, and turning round saw his friend Lemerrier arm in arm with Graham Vane.

"*Bon-jour*, Alain," said Lemerrier, hooking his disengaged arm into Rochebriant's. "I suspect we are going the same way."

Alain felt himself change countenance at this conjecture, and replied coldly, "I think not; I have got to the end of my walk, and shall turn back to Paris;" addressing himself to the Englishman, he said with formal politeness, "I regret not to have found you at home when I called some weeks ago, and no less so to have been out when you had the complaisance to return my visit."

"At all events," replied the Englishman, "let me not lose the opportunity of improving our acquaintance which now offers. It is true that our friend Lemerrier, catching sight of me in the Rue de Rivoli, stopped his *coupé* and carried me off for a promenade in the Bois. The fineness of the day tempted us to get out of his carriage as the Bois came in sight. But if you are going back to Paris I relinquish the Bois and offer myself as your companion."

Frederic (the name is so familiarly English that the reader might think me pedantic did I accentuate it as French) looked from one to the other of his two friends, half amused and half angry.

"And am I to be left alone to achieve a conquest, in which, if I succeed, I shall change into hate and

envy the affection of my two best friends?—Be it so.

"Un véritable amant ne connaît point d'amis."

"I do not comprehend your meaning," said the Marquis, with a compressed lip and a slight frown.

"Bah!" cried Frederic; "come, *franc jeu*—cards on the table—M. Gram Varn was going into the Bois at my suggestion on the chance of having another look at the pearl-coloured angel; and you, Rochebriant, can't deny that you were going into the Bois for the same object."

"One may pardon an *enfant terrible*," said the Englishman, laughing, "but an *ami terrible* should be sent to the galleys. Come, Marquis, let us walk back and submit to our fate. Even were the lady once more visible, we have no chance of being observed by the side of a Lovelace so accomplished and so audacious."

"Adieu, then, recreants—I go alone. Victory or death."

The Parisian beckoned his coachman, entered his carriage, and with a mocking grimace kissed his hand to the companions thus deserting or deserted.

Rochebriant touched the Englishman's arm, and said, "Do you think that Lemerrier could be impertinent enough to accost that lady?"

"In the first place," returned the Englishman, "Lemerrier himself tells me that the lady has for several weeks relinquished her walks in the Bois, and the probability is, therefore, that he will not have the opportunity to accost her. In the next place, it appears that when she did take her solitary walk she did not stray far from her carriage, and was in reach of the protection of her *laquais* and coachman. But to speak honestly, do you who know Lemerrier better than I, take him to be a man who would commit an im-

pertinence to a woman unless there were *vicours* of his own sex to see him do it?"

Alain smiled. "No. Frederic's real nature is an admirable one, and if he ever do anything that he ought to be ashamed of, 'twill be from the pride of showing how finely he can do it. Such was his character at college, and such it still seems at Paris. But it is true that the lady has forsaken her former walk; at least I—I have not seen her since the day I first beheld her in company with Frederic. Yet—yet, pardon me, you were going to the Bois on the chance of seeing her. Perhaps she has changed the direction of her walk, and—and——"

The Marquis stopped short, stammering and confused.

The Englishman scanned his countenance with the rapid glance of a practised observer of men and things, and after a short pause said: "If the lady has selected some other spot for her promenade, I am ignorant of it; nor have I even volunteered the chance of meeting with her, since I learned—first from Lemercier, and afterwards from others—that her destination is the stage. Let us talk frankly, Marquis. I am accustomed to take much exercise on foot, and the Bois is my favourite resort; one day I there found myself in the *allée* which the lady we speak of used to select for her promenade, and there saw her. Something in her face impressed me; how shall I describe the impression? Did you ever open a poem, a romance, in some style wholly new to you, and before you were quite certain whether or not its merits justified the interest which the novelty inspired, you were summoned away, or the book was taken out of your hands? If so; did you not feel an intellectual longing to have another glimpse of the book? That illustration describes my impression, and I own

that I twice again went to the same *allée*. The last time, I only caught sight of the young lady as she was getting into her carriage. As she was then borne away, I perceived one of the custodians of the Bois; and learned, on questioning him, that the lady was in the habit of walking always alone in the same *allée* at the same hour on most fine days, but that he did not know her name or address. A motive of curiosity—perhaps an idle one—then made me ask Lemercier, who boasts of knowing his Paris so intimately, if he could inform me who the lady was. He undertook to ascertain."

"But," interposed the Marquis, "he did not ascertain who she was; he only ascertained where she lived, and that she and an elder companion were Italians,—whom he suspected, without sufficient ground, to be professional singers."

"True; but since then I ascertained more detailed particulars from two acquaintances of mine who happen to know her—M. Savarin, the distinguished writer, and Mrs. Morley, an accomplished and beautiful American lady, who is more than an acquaintance. I may boast the honour of ranking among her friends. As Savarin's villa is at A——, I asked him incidentally if he knew the fair neighbour whose face had so attracted me; and Mrs. Morley being present, and overhearing me, I learned from both what I now repeat to you.

"The young lady is a Signorina Cicogna—at Paris exchanging (except among particular friends), as is not unusual, the outlandish designation of Signorina for the more conventional one of Mademoiselle. Her father was a member of the noble Milanese family of the same name, therefore the young lady is well born. Her father has been long dead; his widow married again an

English gentleman settled in Italy, a scholar and antiquarian; his name was Selby. This gentleman, also dead, bequeathed the Signorina a small but sufficient competence. She is now an orphan, and residing with a companion, a Signora Venosta, who was once a singer of some repute at the Neapolitan Theatre, in the orchestra of which her husband was principal performer; but she relinquished the stage several years ago on becoming a widow, and gave lessons as a teacher. She has the character of being a scientific musician, and of unblemished private respectability. Subsequently she was induced to give up general teaching, and undertake the musical education and the social charge of the young lady with her. This girl is said to have early given promise of extraordinary excellence as a singer, and excited great interest among a coterie of literary critics and musical *cognoscenti*. She was to have come out at the Theatre of Milan a year or two ago, but her career has been suspended in consequence of ill-health, for which she is now at Paris under the care of an English physician, who has made remarkable cures in all complaints of the respiratory organs. M * * *, the great composer, who knows her, says that in expression and feeling she has no living superior, perhaps no equal since Malibran."

"You seem, dear Monsieur, to have taken much pains to acquire this information."

"No great pains were necessary; but had they been I might have taken them, for, as I have owned to you, Mademoiselle Cicogna, while she was yet a mystery to me, strangely interested my thoughts or my fancies. That interest has now ceased. The world of actresses and singers lies apart from mine."

"Yet," said Alain, in a tone of voice that implied doubt, "if I

understand Lemer cier aright, you were going with him to the Bois on the chance of seeing again the lady in whom your interest has ceased."

"Lemer cier's account was not strictly accurate. He stopped his carriage to speak to me on quite another subject, on which I have consulted him, and then proposed to take me on to the Bois. I assented; and it was not till we were in the carriage that he suggested the idea of seeing whether the pearly-robed lady had resumed her walk in the *allée*. You may judge how indifferent I was to that chance when I preferred turning back with you to going on with him. Between you and me, Marquis, to men of our age, who have the business of life before them, and feel that if there be aught in which *noblesse oblige* it is a severe devotion to noble objects, there is nothing more fatal to such devotion than allowing the heart to be blown hither and thither at every breeze of mere fancy, and dreaming ourselves into love with some fair creature whom we never could marry consistently with the career we have set before our ambition. I could not marry an actress—neither, I presume, could the Marquis de Rochebriant; and the thought of a courtship, which excluded the idea of marriage, to a young orphan of name unblemished—of virtue unsuspected—would certainly not be compatible with 'devotion to noble objects.'"

Alain involuntarily bowed his head in assent to the proposition, and, it may be, in submission to an implied rebuke. The two men walked in silence for some minutes, and Graham first spoke, changing altogether the subject of conversation.

"Lemer cier tells me you decline going much into this world of Paris—the capital of capitals—which appears so irresistibly attractive to us foreigners."

"Possibly; but to borrow your

words, I have the business of life before me."

"Business is a good safeguard against the temptations to excess in pleasure, in which Paris abounds. But there is no business which does not admit of some holiday, and all business necessitates commerce with mankind. *A propos*, I was the other evening at the Duchesse de Tarascon's—a brilliant assembly, filled with ministers, senators, and courtiers. I heard your name mentioned."

"Mine?"

"Yes; Duplessis, the rising financier—who, rather to my surprise, was not only present among these official and decorated celebrities, but apparently quite at home among them—asked the Duchesse if she had not seen you since your arrival at Paris. She replied, 'No; that though you were among her nearest connections, you had not called on her;' and bade Duplessis to tell you that you were a *monstre* for not doing so. Whether or not Duplessis will take that liberty, I know not; but you must pardon me if I do. She is a very charming woman, full of talent; and that stream of the world which reflects the stars, with all their mythical influences on fortune, flows through her *salons*."

"I am not born under those stars. I am a Legitimist."

"I did not forget your political creed; but in England the leaders of opposition attend the *salons* of the Prime Minister. A man is not supposed to compromise his opinions because he exchanges social courtesies with those to whom his opinions are hostile. Pray excuse me if I am indiscreet;—I speak as a traveller who asks for information—but do the Legitimists really believe that they best serve their cause by declining any mode of competing with its opponents? Would there not be a fairer chance for the

ultimate victory of their principles if they made their talents and energies individually prominent—if they were known as skilful generals, practical statesmen, eminent diplomatists, brilliant writers?—could they combine—not to sulk and exclude themselves from the great battle-field of the world—but in their several ways to render themselves of such use to their country that some day or other, in one of these revolutionary crises to which France, alas! must long be subjected, they would find themselves able to turn the scale of undecided councils and conflicting jealousies?"

"Monsieur, we hope for the day when the Divine Disposer of events will strike into the hearts of our fickle and erring countrymen the conviction that there will be no settled repose for France save under the sceptre of her rightful kings. But meanwhile we are—I see it more clearly since I have quitted Bretagne—we are a hopeless minority."

"Does not history tell us that the great changes of the world have been wrought by minorities? but on the one condition that the minorities shall not be hopeless? It is almost the other day that the Bonapartists were in a minority that their adversaries called hopeless, and the majority for the Emperor is now so preponderant that I tremble for his safety. When a majority becomes so vast that intellect disappears in the crowd, the date of its destruction commences; for by the law of reaction the minority is installed against it. It is the nature of things that minorities are always more intellectual than multitudes, and intellect is ever at work in sapping numerical force. What your party wants is hope; because without hope there is no energy. I remember hearing my

father say that when he met the Count de Chambord at Ems, that illustrious personage delivered himself of a *belle phrase* much admired by his partisans. The Emperor was then President of the Republic, in a very doubtful and dangerous position. France seemed on the verge of another convulsion. A certain distinguished politician recommended the Count de Chambord to hold himself ready to enter at once as a candidate for the throne. And the Count, with a benignant smile on his handsome face, answered, 'All wrecks come to the shore—the shore does not go to the wrecks.'

"Beautifully said!" exclaimed the Marquis.

"Not if *Le beau est toujours le vrai*. My father, no inexperienced nor unwise politician, in repeating the royal words, remarked: 'The fallacy of the Count's argument is in its metaphor. A man is not a shore. Do you not think that the seamen on board the wrecks would be more grateful to him who did not complacently compare himself to a shore, but considered himself a human being like themselves, and risked his own life in a boat, even though it were a cockle-shell, in the chance of saving theirs?'"

Alain de Rochebriant was a brave man, with that intense sentiment of patriotism which characterises Frenchmen of every rank and persuasion, unless they belong to the Internationalists; and without pausing to consider, he cried, "Your father was right."

The Englishman resumed: "Need I say, my dear Marquis, that I am not a Legitimist? I am not an Imperialist, neither am I an Orleanist nor a Republican. Between all those political divisions it is for Frenchmen to make their choice, and for Englishmen to accept for France that government which

France has established. I view things here as a simple observer. But it strikes me that if I were a Frenchman in your position, I should think myself unworthy my ancestors if I consented to be an insignificant looker-on."

"You are not in my position," said the Marquis, half mournfully, half haughtily, "and you can scarcely judge of it even in imagination."

"I need not much task my imagination; I judge of it by analogy. I was very much in your position when I entered upon what I venture to call my career; and it is the curious similarity between us in circumstances that made me wish for your friendship when that similarity was made known to me by Lemercier, who is not less garrulous than the true Parisian usually is. Permit me to say that, like you, I was reared in some pride of no inglorious ancestry. I was reared also in the expectation of great wealth. Those expectations were not realised: my father had the fault of noble natures—generosity pushed to imprudence: he died poor, and in debt. You retain the home of your ancestors; I had to resign mine."

The Marquis had felt deeply interested in this narrative, and as Graham now paused, took his hand and pressed it.

"One of our most eminent personages said to me about that time, 'Whatever a clever man of your age determines to do or to be, the odds are twenty to one that he has only to live on in order to do or to be it.' Don't you think he spoke truly? I think so."

"I scarcely know what to think," said Rochebriant; "I feel as if you had given me so rough a shake when I was in the midst of a dull dream, that I do not yet know whether I am asleep or awake."

Just as he said this, and to-

wards the Paris end of the Champs Elysées, there was a halt, a sensation among the loungers round them: many of them uncovered in salute.

A man on the younger side of middle age, somewhat inclined to corpulence, with a very striking countenance, was riding slowly by. He returned the salutations he received with the careless dignity of a personage accustomed to respect, and then reigned in his horse by the side of a barouche, and exchanged some words with a portly gentleman who was its sole occupant. The loungers, still halting, seemed to contemplate this parley—between him on horseback and him in the carriage—with very eager interest. Some put their hands behind their ears and pressed forward, as if trying to overhear what was said.

"I wonder," quoth Graham, "whether, with all his cleverness, the Prince has in any way decided what he means to do or to be."

"The Prince!" said Rochebriant, rousing himself from reverie; "what Prince?"

"Do you not recognise him by his wonderful likeness to the first Napoleon—him on horseback talking to Louvier, the great financier?"

"Is that stout *bourgeois* in the carriage Louvier—my mortgagee, Louvier?"

"Your mortgagee, my dear Marquis? Well he is rich enough to be a very lenient one upon payday."

"Hein!—I doubt his leniency,"

said Alain. "I have promised my *avoué* to meet him at dinner. Do you think I did wrong?"

"Wrong! of course not; he is likely to overwhelm you with civilities. Pray don't refuse if he gives you an invitation to his *soirées* next Saturday—I am going to it. One meets there the notabilities most interesting to study—artists, authors, politicians, especially those who call themselves Republicans. He and the Prince agree in one thing—viz., the cordial reception they give to the men who would destroy the state of things upon which Prince and financier both thrive. Hello! here comes Lemercier on return from the Bois."

Lemercier's *coupé* stopped beside the footpath. "What tidings of the *Belle Inconnue*?" asked the Englishman.

"None; she was not there. But I am rewarded—such an adventure—a dame of the *haute volée*—I believe she is a duchess. She was walking with a lap-dog, a pure Pomeranian. A strange poodle flew at the Pomeranian. I drove off the poodle, rescued the Pomeranian, received the most gracious thanks, the sweetest smile: *femme superbe*, middle-aged. I prefer women of forty. *Au revoir*, I am due at the club."

Alain felt a sensation of relief that Lemercier had not seen the lady in the pearl-coloured dress, and quitted the Englishman with a lightened heart.

CHAPTER IV.

"*Piccola, piccola com' è cortese!* another invitation from M. Louvier for next Saturday—*conversazione*." This was said in Italian by an elderly lady bursting noisily into the room—elderly, yet with a youthful expression of face, owing per-

haps to a pair of very vivacious black eyes. She was dressed after a somewhat slatternly fashion, in a wrapper of crimson merino much the worse for wear, a blue handkerchief twisted turban-like round her head, and her feet encased in list-

slippers. The person to whom she addressed herself was a young lady with dark hair, which, despite its evident redundancy, was restrained into smooth glossy braids over the forehead, and at the crown of the small graceful head into the simple knot which Horace has described as "Spartan." Her dress contrasted the speaker's by an exquisite neatness. We have seen her before as the lady in the pearl-coloured robe, but seen now at home she looks much younger. She was one of those whom, encountered in the streets or in society, one might guess to be married—probably a young bride; for thus seen there was about her an air of dignity and of self-possession which suits well with the ideal of chaste youthful matronage; and in the expression of the face there was a pensive thoughtfulness beyond her years. But as she now sat by the open window arranging flowers in a glass bowl, a book lying open on her lap, you would never have said, "What a handsome woman!" you would have said, "What a charming girl!" All about her was maidenly, innocent, and fresh. The dignity of her bearing was lost in household ease, the pensiveness of her expression in an untroubled serene sweetness.

Perhaps many of my readers may have known friends engaged in some absorbing cause of thought, and who are in the habit when they go out, especially if on solitary walks, to take that cause of thought with them. The friend may be an orator meditating his speech, a poet his verses, a lawyer a difficult case, a physician an intricate malady. If you have such a friend, and you observe him thus away from his home, his face will seem to you older and graver. He is absorbed in the care that weighs on him. When you see him in a holiday moment at his own fireside, the

care is thrown aside; perhaps he mastered while abroad the difficulty that had troubled him; he is cheerful, pleasant, sunny. This appears to be very much the case with persons of genius. When in their own houses we usually find them very playful and childlike. Most persons of real genius, whatever they may seem out of doors, are very sweet-tempered at home, and sweet temper is sympathising and genial in the intercourse of private life. Certainly, observing this girl as she now bends over the flowers, it would be difficult to believe her to be the Isaura Cicogna whose letters to Madame de Grantmesnil exhibit the doubts and struggles of an unquiet, discontented, aspiring mind. Only in one or two passages in those letters would you have guessed at the writer in the girl as we now see her.

It is in those passages where she expresses her love of harmony, and her repugnance to contest—those were characteristics you might have read in her face.

Certainly the girl is very lovely—what long dark eyelashes, what soft, tender, dark-blue eyes—now that she looks up and smiles, what a bewitching smile it is!—by what sudden play of rippling dimples the smile is enlivened and redoubled! Do you notice one feature? in very showy beauties it is seldom noticed; but I, being in my way a physiognomist, consider that it is always worth heeding as an index of character. It is the ear. Remark how delicately it is formed in her—none of that heaviness of lobe which is a sure sign of sluggish intellect and coarse perception. Hers is the artist's ear. Note next those hands—how beautifully shaped! small, but not doll-like hands—ready and nimble, firm and nervous hands, that could work for a helpmate. By no means very white, still less red, but somewhat embrowned as by the

sun, such as you may see in girls reared in southern climates, and in her perhaps betokening an impulsive character which had not accustomed itself, when at sport in the open air, to the thralldom of gloves—very impulsive people even in cold climates seldom do.

In conveying to us by a few bold strokes an idea of the sensitive, quick-moved, warm-blooded Henry II., the most impulsive of the Plantagenets, his contemporary chronicler tells us that rather than imprison those active hands of his oven in hawking-gloves, he would suffer his falcon to fix its sharp claws into his wrist. No doubt there is a difference as to what is befitting between a burly bellicose creature like Henry II. and a delicate young lady like Isaura Cicogna; and one would not wish to see those dainty wrists of hers seamed and scarred by a falcon's claws. But a girl may not be less exquisitely feminine for slight heed of artificial prettinesses. Isaura had no need of pale bloodless hands to seem one of Nature's highest grade of gentlewomen even to the most fastidious eyes. About her there was a charm apart from her mere beauty, and often disturbed instead of heightened by her mere intellect: it consisted in a combination of exquisite artistic refinement, and of a generosity of character by which refinement was animated into vigour and warmth.

The room, which was devoted exclusively to Isaura, had in it much that spoke of the occupant. That room, when first taken furnished, had a good deal of the comfortless showiness which belong to ordinary furnished apartments in France, especially in the Parisian suburbs, chiefly let for the summer—thin limp muslin curtains that decline to draw, stiff mahogany chairs covered with yellow Utrecht velvet, a tall *secrétaire*

in a dark corner, an oval buhl-table set in tawdry ormolu, islanded in the centre of a poor but gaudy Scotch carpet, and but one other table of dull walnut-wood standing clothless before a sofa to match the chairs; the eternal ormolu clock flanked by the two eternal ormolu candelabra on the dreary mantelpiece. Some of this garniture had been removed, others softened into cheeriness and comfort. The room somehow or other,—thanks partly to a very moderate expenditure in pretty twills with pretty borders, gracefully simple table-covers, with one or two additional small tables and easy-chairs, two simple vases filled with flowers—thanks still more to a nameless skill in rearrangement, and the disposal of the slight nick-nacks and well-bound volumes, which even in travelling, women, who have cultivated the pleasures of taste, carry about with them,—had been coaxed into that quiet harmony, that tone of consistent subdued colour, which corresponded with the characteristics of the inmate. Most people might have been puzzled where to place the piano, a semi-grand, so as not to take up too much space in the little room; but where it was placed it seemed so at home that you might have supposed the room had been built for it.

There are two kinds of neatness—one is too evident, and makes everything about it seem trite and cold and stiff, and another kind of neatness disappears from our sight in a satisfied sense of completeness—like some exquisite, simple, finished style of writing—an Addison's or a St. Pierre's.

This last sort of neatness belonged to Isaura, and brought to mind the well-known line of Catullus when on recrossing his threshold he invokes its welcome—a line thus

not inelegantly translated by Leigh Hunt—

"Smile every dimple on the cheek of Home."

I entreat the reader's pardon for this long descriptive digression; but Isaura is one of those characters which are called many-sided, and therefore not very easy to comprehend. She gives us one side of her character in her correspondence with Madame de Grantmesnil, and another side of it in her own home with her Italian companion—half nurse, half *chaperon*.

"Monsieur Louvier is indeed very courteous," said Isaura, looking up from the flowers with the dimpled smile we have noticed. "But I think, *Madre*, that we should do well to stay at home on Saturday—not peacefully, for I owe you your revenge at *Euchre*."

"You can't mean it, *Piccola*!" exclaimed the Signora in evident consternation. "Stay at home!—why stay at home? *Euchre* is very well when there is nothing else to do; but change is pleasant—*le bon Dieu* likes it—

'Ne caldo ne gelo
Resta mal in cielo.'

And such beautiful ices one gets at M. Louvier's. Did you taste the Pistachio ice? What fine rooms, and so well lit up!—I adore light. And the ladies so beautifully dressed—one sees the fashions. Stay at home—play at *Euchre* indeed! *Piccola*, you cannot be so cruel to yourself—you are young."

"But, dear *Madre*, just consider—we are invited because we are considered professional singers: your reputation as such is of course established—mine is not; but still I shall be asked to sing as I was asked before; and you know Dr. C—— forbids me to do so except to a very small audience; and it is

so ungracious always to say 'No;' and besides, did you not yourself say, when we came away last time from M. Louvier's, that it was very dull—that you knew nobody—and that the ladies had such superb toilettes that you felt mortified—and——"

"*Zitto! zitto!* you talk idly, *Piccola*—very idly. I was mortified then in my old black Lyons silk; but have I not bought since then my beautiful Greek jacket—scarlet and gold lace? and why should I buy it if I am not to show it?"

"But, dear *Madre*, the jacket is certainly very handsome, and will make an effect in a little dinner at the Savarins or Mrs. Morley's. But in a great formal reception like M. Louvier's will it not look——"

"Splendid!" interrupted the Signora.

"But *singolare*."

"So much the better; did not that great English lady wear such a jacket, and did not every one admire her—*più tosto invidia che compassione*?"

Isaura sighed. Now the jacket of the Signora was the subject of disquietude to her friend. It so happened that a young English lady of the highest rank and the rarest beauty had appeared at M. Louvier's, and indeed generally in the *beau monde* of Paris, in a Greek jacket that became her very much. That jacket had fascinated, at M. Louvier's, the eyes of the Signora. But of this Isaura was unaware. The Signora, on returning home from M. Louvier's, had certainly lamented much over the *mesquin* appearance of her own old-fashioned Italian habiliments compared with the brilliant toilet of the gay Parisiennes; and Isaura—quite woman enough to sympathise with woman in such womanly vanities—proposed the next day to go with the Signora to one of the principal

couturières of Paris, and adapt the Signora's costume to the fashions of the place. But the Signora having predetermined on a Greek jacket, and knowing by instinct that Isaura would be disposed to thwart that splendid predilection, had artfully suggested that it would be better to go to the *couturière* with Madame Savarin, as being a more experienced adviser,—and the *coupé* only held two.

As Madame Savarin was about the same age as the Signora, and dressed as became her years, and in excellent taste, Isaura thought this an admirable suggestion; and pressing into her *chaperon's* hand a *billet de banque* sufficient to re-equip her *cap-à-pie*, dismissed the subject from her mind. But the Signora was much too cunning to submit her passion for the Greek jacket to the discouraging comments of Madame Savarin. Monopolising the *coupé*, she became absolute mistress of the situation. She went to no fashionable *couturière's*. She went to a *magasin* that she had seen advertised in the *Petites Affiches* as supplying superb costumes for fancy-balls and amateur performers in private theatricals. She returned home triumphant, with a jacket still more dazzling to the eye than that of the English lady.

When Isaura first beheld it, she drew back in a sort of superstitious terror, as of a comet or other blazing portent.

"*Cosa stupenda!*"—(stupendous thing!) She might well be dismayed when the Signora proposed to appear thus attired in M. Louvier's *salon*. What might be admired as coquetry of dress in a young beauty

of rank so great that even a vulgarity in her would be called *distingué*, was certainly an audacious challenge of ridicule in the elderly *ci-devant* music-teacher.

But how could Isaura, how can any one of common humanity, say to a woman resolved upon wearing a certain dress, "You are not young and handsome enough for that"?—Isaura could only murmur, "For many reasons I would rather stay at home, dear *Madre*."

"Ah! I see you are ashamed of me," said the Signora, in softened tones: "very natural. When the nightingale sings no more, she is only an ugly brown bird;" and therewith the Signora Venosta seated herself submissively, and began to cry.

On this Isaura sprang up, wound her arms around the Signora's neck, soothed her with coaxing, kissed and petted her, and ended by saying, "Of course we will go;" and, "but let me choose you another dress—a dark-green velvet trimmed with blonde—blonde becomes you so well."

"No, no—I hate green velvet; anybody can wear that. *Piccola*, I am not clever like thee; I cannot amuse myself like thee with books. I am in a foreign land. I have a poor head, but I have a big heart" (another burst of tears); "and that big heart is set on my beautiful Greek jacket."

"Dearest *Madre*," said Isaura, half weeping too, "forgive me; you are right. The Greek jacket is splendid; I shall be so pleased to see you wear it. Poor *Madre*—so pleased to think that in the foreign land you are not without something that pleases *you*."

CHAPTER V.

Conformably with his engagement to meet M. Louvier, Alain found himself on the day and at the hour named in M. Gandrin's *salon*. On this occasion Madame Gandrin did not appear. Her husband was accustomed to give *dîners d'hommes*. The great man had not yet arrived. "I think, Marquis," said M. Gandrin, "that you will not regret having followed my advice: my representations have disposed Louvier to regard you with much favour, and he is certainly flattered by being permitted to make your personal acquaintance."

The *avoué* had scarcely finished this little speech, when M. Louvier was announced. He entered with a beaming smile, which did not detract from his imposing presence. His flatterers had told him that he had a look of Louis Philippe; therefore he had sought to imitate the dress and the *bonhomie* of that monarch of the middle class. He wore a wig elaborately piled up, and shaped his whiskers in royal harmony with the royal wig. Above all, he studied that social frankness of manner with which the able sovereign dispelled awe of his presence or dread of his astuteness. Decidedly he was a man very pleasant to converse and to deal with—so long as there seemed to him something to gain and nothing to lose by being pleasant. He returned Alain's bow by a cordial offer of both expansive hands, into the grasp of which the hands of the aristocrat utterly disappeared. "Charmed to make your acquaintance, Marquis—still more charmed if you will let me be useful during your *séjour* at Paris. *Ma foi*, excuse my bluntness, but you are a *fort beau garçon*. Monsieur, your father was a handsome man, but you beat him hollow.

Gandrin, my friend, would not you and I give half our fortunes for one year of this fine fellow's youth spent at Paris? *Peste!* what love-letters we should have, with no need to buy them by *billets de banque!*" Thus he ran on, much to Alain's confusion, till dinner was announced. Then there was something *grandiose* in the frank *bourgeois* style where-with he expanded his napkin and twisted one end into his waistcoat—it was so manly a renunciation of the fashions which a man so *répandu* in all circles might be supposed to follow;—as if he were both too great and too much in earnest for such frivolities. He was evidently a sincere *bon vivant*, and M. Gandrin had no less evidently taken all requisite pains to gratify his taste. The Montrachet served with the oysters was of precious vintage. That *vin de madère* which accompanied the *potage à la bisque* would have contented an American. And how radiant became Louvier's face, when amongst the *entrées* he came upon *laitances de carpes!* "The best thing in the world," he cried, and one gets it so seldom since the old Rocher de Cancale has lost its renown. At private houses, what does one get now?—*blanc de poulet*—flavourless trash. After all, Gandrin, when we lose the love-letters, it is some consolation that *laitances de carpes* and *sautés de foie gras* are still left to fill up the void in our hearts. Marquis, heed my counsel; cultivate betimes the taste for the table; that and whist are the sole resources of declining years. You never met my old friend Talleyrand—ah, no! he was long before your time. He cultivated both, but he made two mistakes. No man's intellect is perfect on all sides. He confined himself to one meal a-day,

and he never learned to play well at whist. Avoid his errors, my young friend—avoid them. Gandrin, I guess this pine-apple is English—it is superb.”

“You are right—a present from the Marquis of H——.”

“Ah! instead of a fee, I wager. The Marquis gives nothing for nothing, dear man! Droll people the English. You have never visited England, I presume, *cher Rochebriant*?”

The affable financier had already made vast progress in familiarity with his silent fellow-guest.

When the dinner was over and the three men had re-entered the *salon* for coffee and liqueurs, Gandrin left Louvier and Alain alone, saying he was going to his cabinet for cigars which he could recommend. Then Louvier, lightly patting the Marquis on the shoulder, said with what the French call *effusion*,—“My dear Rochebriant, your father and I did not quite understand each other. He took a tone of *grand Seigneur* that sometimes wounded me; and I in turn was perhaps too rude in asserting my rights—as creditor, shall I say?—no, as fellow-citizen; and Frenchmen are so vain, so over-susceptible—fire up at a word—take offence when none is meant. We two, my dear boy, should be superior to such national foibles. *Bref*—I have a mortgage on your lands. Why should that thought mar our friendship? At my age, though I am not yet old, one is flattered if the young like us—pleased if we can oblige them, and remove from their career any little obstacle in its way. Gandrin tells me you wish to consolidate all the charges on your estate into one on lower rate of interest. Is it so?”

“I am so advised,” said the Marquis.

“And very rightly advised; come

and talk with me about it some day next week. I hope to have a large sum of money set free in a few days. Of course, mortgages on land don't pay like speculations at the Bourse; but I am rich enough to please myself. We will see—we will see.”

Here Gandrin returned with the cigars; but Alain at that time never smoked, and Louvier excused himself, with a laugh and a sly wink, on the plea that he was going to pay his respects—as doubtless that *joli garçon* was going to do, likewise—to a *belle dame* who did not reckon the smell of tobacco among the perfumes of Houbigant or Arabia.

“Meanwhile,” added Louvier, turning to Gandrin, “I have something to say to you on business about the contract for that new street of mine. No hurry—after our young friend has gone to his ‘*assignation*.’”

Alain could not misinterpret the hint; and in a few moments took leave of his host more surprised than disappointed that the financier had not invited him, as Graham had assumed he would, to his *soirée* the following evening.

When Alain was gone, Louvier's jovial manner disappeared also, and became bluffly rude rather than bluntly cordial.

“Gandrin, what did you mean by saying that the young man was no *muscadin*? *Muscadin*—*aristocrat*—offensive from top to toe.”

“You amaze me—you seemed to take to him so cordially.”

“And pray, were you too blind to remark with what cold reserve he responded to my condescensions? How he winced when I called him Rochebriant? how he coloured when I called him ‘*dear boy*’! These aristocrats think we ought to thank them on our knees when they take our money, and”—here Louvier's face darkened—“seduce our women.”

"Monsieur Louvier, in all France I do not know a greater aristocrat than yourself."

I don't know whether M. Gandrin meant that speech as a compliment, but M. Louvier took it as such—laughed complacently and rubbed his hands. "Ay, ay, *millionnaires* are the real aristocrats, for they have power, as my *beau Marquis* will soon find. I must bid you good-night. Of course I shall see Madame Gandrin and yourself to-morrow. Prepare for a motley gathering—lots of demo-

crats and foreigners, with artists and authors and such creatures."

"Is that the reason why you did not invite the Marquis?"

"To be sure; I would not shock so pure a Legitimist by contact with the sons of the people, and make him still colder to myself. No; when he comes to my house he shall meet lions and *viveurs* of the *haut ton*, who will play into my hands by teaching him how to ruin himself in the quickest manner and in the *genre Louis XV. Bon soir, mon vieux.*"

CHAPTER VI.

The next night Graham in vain looked round for Alain in M. Louvier's *salon*, and missed his high-bred mien and melancholy countenance. M. Louvier had been for some four years a childless widower, but his receptions were not the less numerous attended, nor his establishment less magnificently *monté* for the absence of a presiding lady: very much the contrary; it was noticeable how much he had increased his status and prestige as a social personage since the death of his unlamented spouse.

To say truth, she had been rather a heavy drag on his triumphal car. She had been the heiress of a man who had amassed a great deal of money; not in the higher walks of commerce, but in a retail trade.

Louvier himself was the son of a rich money-lender; he had entered life with an ample fortune and an intense desire to be admitted into those more brilliant circles in which fortune can be dissipated with *éclat*. He might not have attained this object but for the friendly countenance of a young noble who was then

But this young noble, of whom later we shall hear more, came suddenly to grief; and when the money-lender's son lost that potent protector, the dandies, previously so civil, showed him a very cold shoulder.

Louvier then became an ardent democrat, and recruited the fortune he had impaired by the aforesaid marriage, launched into colossal speculations, and became enormously rich. His aspirations for social rank now revived, but his wife sadly interfered with them. She was thrifty by nature; sympathised little with her husband's genius for accumulation; always said he would end in a hospital; hated Republicans; despised authors and artists; and by the ladies of the *beau monde* was pronounced common and vulgar.

So long as she lived, it was impossible for Louvier to realise his ambition of having one of the *salons* which at Paris establish celebrity and position. He could not then command those advantages of wealth which he especially coveted. He was eminently successful in doing this now. As soon as she was safe in Père la Chaise, he enlarged his

"The glass of fashion and the mould of forin."

hotel by the purchase and annexation of an adjoining house; redecorated and refurnished it, and in this task displayed, it must be said to his credit, or to that of the administrators he selected for the purpose, a nobleness of taste rarely exhibited nowadays. His collection of pictures was not large, and consisted exclusively of the French school, ancient and modern, for in all things Louvier affected the patriot. But each of those pictures was a gem; such Watteaus! such Greuzes! such landscapes by Patell! and, above all, such masterpieces by Ingrès, Horace Vernet, and Delaroche, were worth all the doubtful originals of Flemish and Italian art which make the ordinary boast of private collectors.

These pictures occupied two rooms of moderate size, built for their reception, and lighted from above. The great *salon* to which they led contained treasures scarcely less precious; the walls were covered with the richest silks which the looms of Lyons could produce. Every piece of furniture here was a work of art in its way: console-tables of Florentine mosaic, inlaid with pearl and lapis-lazuli; cabinets in which the exquisite designs of the *renaissance* were carved in ebony; colossal vases of Russian malachite, but wrought by French artists. The very nicknacks scattered carelessly about the room might have been admired in the cabinets of the Palazzo Pitti. Beyond this room lay the *salle de danse*, its ceiling painted by * * *, supported by white marble columns, the glazed balcony and the angles of the room filled with tiers of exotics. In the dining-room, on the same floor, on the other side of the landing-place, were stored in glazed buffets, not only vessels and salvers of plate, silver and gold, but, more costly still, matchless specimens of

Sèvres and Limoges, and medieval varieties of Venetian glass. On the ground-floor, which opened on the lawn of a large garden, Louvier had his suite of private apartments, furnished, as he said, "simply, according to English notions of comfort." Englishmen would have said "according to French notions of luxury." Enough of these details, which a writer cannot give without feeling himself somewhat vulgarised in doing so, but without a loose general idea of which a reader would not have an accurate conception of something not vulgar—of something grave, historical, possibly tragical, the existence of a Parisian *millionnaire* at the date of this narrative.

The evidence of wealth was everywhere manifest at M. Louvier's, but it was everywhere refined by an equal evidence of taste. The apartments devoted to hospitality ministered to the delighted study of artists, to whom free access was given, and of whom two or three might be seen daily in the "show-rooms," copying pictures or taking sketches of rare articles of furniture or effects for palatial interiors.

Among the things which rich English visitors of Paris most coveted to see was M. Louvier's hotel; and few among the richest left it without a sigh of envy and despair. Only in such London houses as belong to a Sutherland or a Holford could our metropolis exhibit a splendour as opulent and a taste as refined.

M. Louvier had his set evenings for popular assemblies. At these were entertained the Liberals of every shade, from *tricolor* to *rouge*, with the artists and writers most in vogue, *pêle-mêle* with decorated diplomatists, ex-ministers, Orleanists, and Republicans, distinguished foreigners, plutocrats of the Bourse, and lions male and female from the arid nurse of that race, the Chaussée d'Antin.

Of his more select reunions something will be said later.

"And how does this poor Paris metamorphosed please Mons. Vane?" asked a Frenchman with a handsome intelligent countenance, very carefully dressed, though in a somewhat bygone fashion, and carrying off his tenth lustrum with an air too sprightly to evince any sense of the weight.

This gentleman, the Vicomte de Brézé, was of good birth, and had a legitimate right to his title of Vicomte, which is more than can be said of many vicomtes one meets at Paris. He had no other property, however, than a principal share in an influential journal, to which he was a lively and sparkling contributor. In his youth, under the reign of Louis Philippe, he had been a chief among literary exquisites, and Balzac was said to have taken him more than once as his model for those brilliant young *vauriens* who figure in the great novelist's comedy of 'Human Life.' The Vicomte's fashion expired with the Orleanist dynasty.

"Is it possible, my dear Vicomte," answered Graham, "not to be pleased with a capital so marvellously embellished?"

"Embellished it may be to foreign eyes," said the Vicomte, sighing, "but not improved to the taste of a Parisian like me. I miss the dear Paris of old—the streets associated with my *beaux jours* are no more. Is there not something drearily monotonous in those interminable perspectives? How frightfully the way lengthens before one's eyes! In the twists and curves of the old Paris one was relieved from the pain of seeing how far one had to go from one spot to another—each tortuous street had a separate idiosyncrasy; what picturesque diversities, what interesting recollections—all swept away! *Mon Dieu!* and what

for? Miles of florid *façades*, staring and glaring at one with goggle-eyed pitiless windows. House-rents trebled; and the consciousness that, if you venture to grumble, underground railways, like concealed volcanoes, can burst forth on you at any moment with an eruption of bayonets and muskets. This *maudit empire* seeks to keep its hold on France much as a *grand seigneur* seeks to enchain a nymph of the ballet, tricks her out in finery and baubles, and insures her infidelity the moment he fails to satisfy her whims."

"Vicomte," answered Graham, "I have had the honour to know you since I was a small boy at a preparatory school home for the holidays, and you were a guest at my father's country-house. You were then *fêté* as one of the most promising writers among the young men of the day, especially favoured by the princes of the reigning family. I shall never forget the impression made on me by your brilliant appearance and your no less brilliant talk."

"Ah! *ces beaux jours! ce bon Louis Philippe, ce cher petit Joinville,*" sighed the Vicomte.

"But at that day you compared *le bon Louis Philippe* to Robert Macaire. You described all his sons, including, no doubt, *ce cher petit Joinville*, in terms of resentful contempt, as so many plausible *gamins* whom Robert Macaire was training to cheat the public in the interest of the family firm. I remember my father saying to you in answer, 'No royal house in Europe has more sought to develop the literature of an epoch, and to signalise its representatives by social respect and official honours, than that of the Orleans dynasty; you, M. de Brézé, do but imitate your elders in seeking to destroy the dynasty under which you flourish;

should you succeed, you *hommes de plume* will be the first sufferers and the loudest complainers.”

“*Cher Monsieur Vane*,” said the Vicomte, smiling complacently, “Your father did me great honour in classing me with Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas, Emile de Girardin, and the other stars of the Orleanist galaxy, including our friend here, M. Savarin. A very superior man was your father.”

“And,” said Savarin, who, being an Orleanist, had listened to Graham’s speech with an approving smile—“and if I remember right, my dear De Brézé, no one was more brilliantly severe than yourself on poor De Lamartine and the Republic that succeeded Louis Philippe; no one more emphatically expressed the yearning desire for another Napoleon to restore order at home and renown abroad. Now you have got another Napoleon.”

“And I want change for my Napoleon,” said De Brézé, laughing.

“My dear Vicomte,” said Graham, “one thing we may all grant, that in culture and intellect you are far superior to the mass of your fellow-Parisians; that you are therefore a favourable type of their political character.”

“*Ah, mon cher, vous êtes trop aimable.*”

“And therefore I venture to say this, if the archangel Gabriel were permitted to descend to Paris and form the best government for France that the wisdom of seraph could devise, it would not be two years—I doubt if it would be six months—before out of this Paris, which you call the *Foyer des Idées*, would emerge a powerful party, adorned by yourself and other *hommes de plume*, in favour of a revolution for the benefit of *ce bon Satan* and *ce cher petit Beelzebub*.”

“What a pretty vein of satire you have, *mon cher*!” said the Vi-

comte, good-humouredly; “there is a sting of truth in your witticism. Indeed, I must send you some articles of mine in which I have said much the same thing—*les beaux esprits se rencontrent*. The fault of us French is impatience—desire of change; but then it is that desire which keeps the world going and retains our place at the head of it. However, at this time we are all living too fast for our money to keep up with it, and too slow for our intellect not to flag. We vie with each other on the road to ruin, for in literature all the old paths to fame are shut up.”

Here a tall gentleman, with whom the Vicomte had been conversing before he accosted Vane, and who had remained beside De Brézé listening in silent attention to this colloquy, interposed, speaking in the slow voice of one accustomed to measure his words, and with a slight but unmistakable German accent—“There is that, M. de Brézé, which makes one think gravely of what you say so lightly. Viewing things with the unprejudiced eyes of a foreigner, I recognise much for which France should be grateful to the Emperor. Under his sway her material resources have been marvellously augmented; her commerce has been placed by the treaty with England on sounder foundations, and is daily exhibiting richer life; her agriculture has made a prodigious advance wherever it has allowed room for capitalists, and escaped from the curse of petty allotments and peasant-proprietors—a curse which would have ruined any country less blessed by Nature; turbulent factions have been quelled; internal order maintained; the external prestige of France, up at least to the date of the Mexican war, increased to an extent that might satisfy even a Frenchman’s *amour propre*; and her advance in

civilisation has been manifested by the rapid creation of a naval power which should put even England on her mettle. But, on the other hand——”

“Ay, on the other hand,” said the Vicomte.

“On the other hand there are in the imperial system two causes of decay and of rot silently at work. They may not be the faults of the Emperor, but they are such misfortunes as may cause the fall of the Empire. The first is an absolute divorce between the political system and the intellectual culture of the nation. The throne and the system rest on ‘universal suffrage’—on a suffrage which gives to classes the most ignorant a power that preponderates over all the healthful elements of knowledge. It is the tendency of all ignorant multitudes to personify themselves, as it were, in one individual. They cannot comprehend you when you argue for a principle; they do comprehend you when you talk of a name. The Emperor Napoleon is to them a name, and the prefects and officials who influence their votes are paid for incorporating all principles in the shibboleth of that single name. You have thus sought the well-spring of a political system in the deepest stratum of popular ignorance. To rid popular ignorance of its normal revolutionary bias, the rural peasants are indoctrinated with the conservatism that comes from the fear which appertains to property. They have their roods of land or their shares in a national loan. Thus you estrange the crassitude of an ignorant democracy still more from the intelligence of the educated classes by combining it with the most selfish and abject of all the apprehensions that are ascribed to aristocracy and wealth. What is thus embedded in the

depths of your society makes itself shown on the surface. Napoleon III. has been compared to Augustus; and there are many startling similitudes between them in character and in fate. Each succeeds to the heritage of a great name that had contrived to unite autocracy with the popular cause. Each subdued all rival competitors, and inaugurated despotic rule in the name of freedom. Each mingled enough of sternness with ambitious will to stain with bloodshed the commencement of his power; but it would be an absurd injustice to fix the same degree of condemnation on the *coup d'état* as humanity fixes on the earlier cruelties of Augustus. Each, once firm in his seat, became mild and clement: Augustus perhaps from policy, Napoleon III. from a native kindness of disposition which no fair critic of character can fail to acknowledge. Enough of similitudes; now for one salient difference. Observe how earnestly Augustus strove, and how completely he succeeded in the task, to rally round him all the leading intellects in every grade and of every party—the followers of Antony, the friends of Brutus—every great captain, every great statesman, every great writer, every man who could lend a ray of mind to his own Julian constellation, and make the age of Augustus an era in the annals of human intellect and genius. But this has not been the good fortune of your Emperor. The result of his system has been the suppression of intellect in every department. He has rallied round him not one great statesman; his praises are hymned by not one great poet. The *célébrités* of a former day stand aloof; or, preferring exile to constrained allegiance, assail him with unremitting missiles from their asylum in foreign shores. His reign is sterile of new *célébrités*. The

ew that arise enlist themselves against him. Whenever he shall venture to give full freedom to the press and to the legislature, the intellect thus suppressed or thus hostile will burst forth in collected volume. His partisans have not been trained and disciplined to meet such assailants. They will be as weak as no doubt they will be violent. And the worst is, that the intellect thus rising in mass against him will be warped and distorted, like captives who, being kept in chains, exercise their limbs, on escaping, in vehement jumps without definite object. The directors of emancipated opinion may thus be terrible enemies to the Imperial Government, but they will be very unsafe councillors to France. Concurrently with this divorce between the Imperial system and the national intellect—a divorce so complete that even your *salons* have lost their wit, and even your caricatures their point—a corruption of manners which the Empire, I own, did not originate, but inherit, has become so common that every one owns and nobody blames it. The gorgeous ostentation of the Court has perverted the habits of the people. The intelligence obstructed from other vents betakes itself to speculating for a fortune; and the greed of gain and the passion for show are sapping the noblest elements of the old French manhood. Public opinion stamps with no opprobrium a minister or favourite who profits by a job; and I fear you will find that jobbing pervades all your administrative departments."

"All very true," said De Brézé, with a shrug of the shoulders and in a tone of levity that seemed to ridicule the assertion he volunteered; "Virtue and Honour banished from courts and *salons* and the cabinets

of authors, ascend to fairer heights in the attics of *ouvriers*."

"The *ouvriers*, *ouvriers* of Paris!" cried this terrible German.

"Ay, Monsieur le Comte, what can you say against our *ouvriers*? A German count cannot condescend to learn anything about *ces petits gens*."

"Monsieur," replied the German, "in the eyes of a statesman there are no *petits gens*, and in those of a philosopher no *petites choses*. We in Germany have too many difficult problems affecting our working classes to solve, not to have induced me to glean all the information I can as to the *ouvriers* of Paris. They have amongst them men of aspirations as noble as can animate the souls of philosophers and poets, perhaps not the less noble because common-sense and experience cannot follow their flight. But as a body, the *ouvriers* of Paris have not been elevated in political morality by the benevolent aim of the Emperor to find them ample work and good wages independent of the natural laws that regulate the markets of labour. Accustomed thus to consider the State bound to maintain them, the moment the State fails in that impossible task, they will accommodate their honesty to a rush upon property under the name of social reform. Have you not noticed how largely increased within the last few years is the number of those who cry out, '*La Propriété, c'est le vol*'? Have you considered the rapid growth of the International Association? I do not say that for all these evils the Empire is exclusively responsible. To a certain degree they are found in all rich communities, especially where democracy is more or less in the ascendant. To a certain extent they exist in the large towns of Germany; they are

conspicuously increasing in England; they are acknowledged to be dangerous in the United States of America; they are, I am told on good authority, making themselves visible with the spread of civilisation in Russia. But under the French Empire they have become glaringly rampant, and I venture to predict that the day is not far off when the rot at work throughout all layers and strata of French society will insure a fall of the fabric at the sound of which the world will ring.

"There is many a fair and stately tree which continues to throw out its leaves and rear its crest till suddenly the wind smites it, and then, and not till then, the trunk which seems so solid is found to be but the rind to a mass of crumbled powder."

"Monsieur le Comte," said the Vicomte, "you are a severe critic and a lugubrious prophet. But a German is so safe from revolution that he takes alarm at the stir of movement which is the normal state of the French *esprit*."

"French *esprit* may soon evaporate into Parisian *bêtise*. As to Germany being safe from revolution, allow me to repeat a saying of Goethe's—but has M. le Comte ever heard of Goethe?"

"Goethe, of course—*très joli écrivain*."

"Goethe said to some one who was making much the same remark as yourself, 'We Germans are in a state of revolution now, but we do things so slowly that it will be a hundred years before we Germans shall find it out. But when completed, it will be the greatest revolution society has yet seen, and will last like the other revolutions that, beginning, scarce noticed, in Germany, have transformed the world.'"

"*Diabla*, M. le Comte!—Germans

transformed the world! What revolutions do you speak of?"

"The invention of gunpowder, the invention of printing, and the expansion of a monk's quarrel with his Pope into the Lutheran revolution."

Here the German paused, and asked the Vicomte to introduce him to Vane, which De Brézé did by the title of Count von Rudesheim. On hearing Vane's name, the Count inquired if he were related to the orator and statesman, George Graham Vane, whose opinions, uttered in Parliament, were still authoritative among German thinkers. This compliment to his deceased father immensely gratified, but at the same time considerably surprised, the Englishman. His father, no doubt, had been a man of much influence in the British House of Commons—a very weighty speaker, and, while in office, a first-rate administrator; but Englishmen know what a House of Commons reputation is—how fugitive, how little cosmopolitan; and that a German count should ever have heard of his father, delighted, but amazed him. In stating himself to be the son of George Graham Vane, he intimated not only the delight, but the amaze, with the frank *savoir vivre* which was one of his salient characteristics.

"Sir," replied the German, speaking in very correct English, but still with his national accent, "every German reared to political service studies England as the school for practical thought distinct from impracticable theories. Long may you allow us to do so; only excuse me one remark; never let the selfish element of the practical supersede the generous element. Your father never did so in his speeches, and therefore we admired him. At the present day we don't so much care

to study English speeches. They may be insular,—they are not European. I honour England; Heaven grant that you may not be making sad mistakes in the belief that you can long remain England if you cease to be European." Herewith the German bowed, not uncivilly—on the contrary, somewhat cere-

moniously—and disappeared with a Prussian Secretary of Embassy, whose arm he linked in his own, into a room less frequented.

"Vicomte, who and what is your German count?" asked Vane.

"A solemn pedant," answered the lively Vicomte—"a German count, *que voulez-vous de plus?*"

CHAPTER VII.

A little later Graham found himself alone amongst the crowd. Attracted by the sound of music, he had strayed into one of the rooms whence it came, and in which, though his range of acquaintance at Paris was, for an Englishman, large and somewhat miscellaneous, he recognised no familiar countenance. A lady was playing the pianoforte—playing remarkably well—with accurate science, with that equal lightness and strength of finger which produces brilliancy of execution. But to appreciate her music one should be musical one's self. It wanted the charm that fascinates the uninitiated. The guests in the room were musical connoisseurs—a class with whom Graham Vane had nothing in common. Even if he had been more capable of enjoying the excellence of the player's performance, the glance he directed towards her would have sufficed to chill him into indifference. She was not young, and, with prominent features and puckered skin, was twisting her face into strange sentimental grimaces, as if terribly overcome by the beauty and pathos of her own melodies. To add to Vane's displeasure, she was dressed in a costume wholly antagonistic to his views of the becoming—in a Greek jacket of gold and scarlet, contrasted by a Turkish turban.

Muttering "What she - mounte-

bank have we here?" he sank into a chair behind the door, and fell into an absorbed reverie. From this he was aroused by the cessation of the music, and the hum of subdued approbation by which it was followed. Above the hum swelled the imposing voice of M. Louvier, as he rose from a seat on the other side of the piano, by which his bulky form had been partially concealed.

"Bravo! perfectly played—excellent! Can we not persuade your charming young countrywoman to gratify us even by a single song?" Then turning aside and addressing some one else invisible to Graham, he said, "Does that tyrannical doctor still compel you to silence, Mademoiselle?"

A voice so sweetly modulated, that if there were any sarcasm in the words it was lost in the softness of pathos, answered, "Nay, M. Louvier, he rather overtakes the words at my command in thankfulness to those who, like yourself, so kindly regard me as something else than a singer."

It was not the she-mountebank who thus spoke. Graham rose and looked round with instinctive curiosity. He met the face that he said had haunted him. She too had risen, standing near the piano, with one hand tenderly resting on the she-mountebank's scarlet and gilded

shoulder:—the face that haunted him, and yet with a difference. There was a faint blush on the clear pale cheek, a soft yet playful light in the grave dark-blue eyes, which had not been visible in the countenance of the young lady in the pearl-coloured robe. Graham did not hear Louvier's reply, though no doubt it was loud enough for him to hear. He sank again into reverie. Other guests now came into the room, among them Frank Morley, styled Colonel—(eminent military titles in the States do not always denote eminent military services)—a wealthy American, and his sprightly and beautiful wife. The Colonel was a clever man, rather stiff in his deportment, and grave in speech, but by no means without a vein of dry humour. By the French he was esteemed a high-bred specimen of the kind of *grand seigneur* which democratic republics engender. He spoke French like a Parisian, had an imposing presence, and spent a great deal of money with the elegance of a man of taste and the generosity of a man of heart. His high breeding was not quite so well understood by the English, because the English are apt to judge breeding by little conventional rules not observed by the American Colonel. He had a slight nasal twang, and introduced "sir" with redundant ceremony in addressing Englishmen, however intimate he might be with them, and had the habit (perhaps with a sly intention to startle or puzzle them) of adorning his style of conversation with quaint Americanisms.

Nevertheless, the genial amiability and the inherent dignity of his character made him acknowledged as a thorough gentleman by every Englishman, however conventional in

tastes, who became admitted into his intimate acquaintance.

Mrs. Morley, ten or twelve years younger than her husband, had no nasal twang, and employed no Americanisms in her talk, which was frank, lively, and at times eloquent. She had a great ambition to be esteemed of a masculine understanding: Nature unkindly frustrated that ambition in rendering her a model of feminine grace. Graham was intimately acquainted with Colonel Morley; and with Mrs. Morley had contracted one of those cordial friendships which, perfectly free alike from polite flirtation and Platonic attachment, do sometimes spring up between persons of opposite sexes without the slightest danger of changing its honest character into morbid sentimentality or unlawful passion. The Morleys stopped to accost Graham, but the lady had scarcely said three words to him, before, catching sight of the haunting face, she darted towards it. Her husband, less emotional, bowed at the distance, and said, "To my taste, sir, the Signorina Cicogna is the loveliest girl in the present *bea*,"* and full of mind, sir."

"Singing mind," said Graham, sarcastically, and in the ill-natured impulse of a man striving to check his inclination to admire.

"I have not heard her sing," replied the American, dryly; "and the words 'singing mind' are doubtless accurately English, since you employ them, but at Boston the collocation would be deemed barbarous. You fly off the handle. The epithet, sir, is not in concord with the substantive."

"Boston would be in the right, my dear Colonel. I stand rebuked; mind has little to do with singing."

**Bea*, a common expression in "the West" for a meeting or gathering of people.

"I take leave to deny that, sir. You fire into the wrong flock, and would not hazard the remark if you had conversed as I have with Signorina Cicogna."

Before Graham could answer, Signorina Cicogna stood before him, leaning lightly on Mrs. Morley's arm.

"Frank, you must take us into the refreshment-room," said Mrs. Morley to her husband; and then, turning to Graham, added, "Will you help to make way for us?"

Graham bowed, and offered his arm to the fair speaker.

"No," said she, taking her husband's. "Of course you know the Signorina, or, as we usually call her, Mademoiselle Cicogna. No? Allow me to present you—Mr. Graham Vane—Mademoiselle Cicogna. Mademoiselle speaks English like a native."

And thus abruptly Graham was introduced to the owner of the haunting face. He had lived too much in the great world all his life to retain the innate shyness of an Englishman, but he certainly was confused and embarrassed when his eyes met Isaura's, and he felt her hand on his arm. Before quitting the room she paused and looked back—Graham's look followed her own, and saw behind them the lady with the scarlet jacket escorted by some portly and decorated connoisseur. Isaura's face brightened to another kind of brightness—a pleased and tender light.

"Poor dear *Madre*," she murmured to herself in Italian.

"*Madre*," echoed Graham, also in Italian. "I have been misinformed, then: that lady is your mother?"

Isaura laughed a pretty low silvery laugh, and replied in English, "She is not my mother, but I call her *Madre*, for I know no name more loving."

Graham was touched, and said gently, "Your own mother was evidently very dear to you."

Isaura's lip quivered, and she made a slight movement as if she would have withdrawn her hand from his arm. He saw that he had offended or wounded her, and with the straightforward frankness natural to him, resumed quickly—

"My remark was impertinent in a stranger; forgive it."

"There is nothing to forgive, Monsieur."

The two now threaded their way through the crowd, both silent. At last, Isaura, thinking she ought to speak first in order to show that Graham had not offended her, said—

"How lovely Mrs. Morley is!"

"Yes, and I like the spirit and ease of her American manner: have you known her long, Mademoiselle?"

"No; we met her for the first time some weeks ago at M. Savarin's."

"Was she very eloquent on the rights of women?"

"What! you have heard her on that subject?"

"I have rarely heard her on any other, though she is the best and perhaps the cleverest friend I have at Paris; but that may be my fault, for I like to start it. It is a relief to the languid small-talk of society to listen to any one thoroughly in earnest upon turning the world topsy-turvy."

"Do you suppose poor Mrs. Morley would seek to do that if she had her rights?" asked Isaura, with her musical laugh.

"Not a doubt of it; but perhaps you share her opinions."

"I scarcely know what her opinions are, but——"

"Yes—but?——"

"There is a—what shall I call

it?—a persuasion—a sentiment—out of which the opinions probably spring that I do share.”

“Indeed? a persuasion, a sentiment, for instance, that a woman should have votes in the choice of legislators, and, I presume, in the task of legislation?”

“No, that is not what I mean. Still, that is an opinion, right or wrong, which grows out of the sentiment I speak of.”

“Pray explain the sentiment.”

“It is always so difficult to define a sentiment, but does it not strike you that in proportion as the tendency of modern civilisation has been to raise women more and more to an intellectual equality with men—in proportion as they read and study and think—an uneasy sentiment, perhaps querulous, perhaps unreasonable, grows up within their minds that the conventions of the world are against the complete development of the faculties thus aroused and the ambition thus animated;—that they cannot but rebel, though it may be silently, against the notions of the former age, when women were not thus educated; notions that the aim of the sex should be to steal through life unremarked; that it is a reproach to be talked of; that women are plants to be kept in a hothouse and forbidden the frank liberty of growth in the natural air and sunshine of heaven. This, at least, is a sentiment which has sprung up within myself, and I imagine that it is the sentiment which has given birth to many of the opinions or doctrines that seem absurd, and very likely are so, to the general public. I don’t pretend even to have considered those doctrines. I don’t pretend to say what may be the remedies for the restlessness and uneasiness I feel. I doubt if on this earth there be any remedies;

all I know is, that I feel restless and uneasy.”

Graham gazed on her countenance as she spoke, with an astonishment not unmingled with tenderness and compassion—astonishment at the contrast between a vein of reflection so hardy, expressed in a style of language that seemed to him so masculine, and the soft velvet dreamy eyes, the gentle tones, and delicate purity of hues rendered younger still by the blush that deepened their bloom.

At this moment they had entered the refreshment room; but a dense group being round the table, and both perhaps forgetting the object for which Mrs. Morley had introduced them to each other, they had mechanically seated themselves on an ottoman in a recess while Isaura was yet speaking. It must seem as strange to the reader as it did to Graham that such a speech should have been spoken by so young a girl to an acquaintance so new. But in truth Isaura was very little conscious of Graham’s presence. She had got on a subject that perplexed and tormented her solitary thoughts—she was but thinking aloud.

“I believe,” said Graham, after a pause, “that I comprehend your sentiment much better than I do Mrs. Morley’s opinions; but permit me one observation. You say, truly, that the course of modern civilisation has more or less affected the relative position of woman cultivated beyond that level on which she was formerly contented to stand—the nearer perhaps to the heart of man because not lifting her head to his height;—and hence a sense of restlessness, uneasiness. But do you suppose that, in this whirl and dance of the atoms which compose the rolling ball of the civilised world, it is only women that are made

restless and uneasy? Do you not see, amid the masses congregated in the wealthiest cities of the world, writhings and struggles against the received order of things? In this sentiment of discontent there is a certain truthfulness, because it is an element of human nature; and how best to deal with it is a problem yet unsolved. But in the opinions and doctrines to which, among the masses, the sentiment gives birth, the wisdom of the wisest detects only the certainty of a common ruin, offering for reconstruction the same building materials as the former edifice—materials not likely to be improved because they may be defaced. Ascend from the working classes to all others in which civilised culture prevails, and you will find that same restless feeling—the fluttering of untried wings against the bars between wider space and their longings. Could you poll all the educated ambitious young men in England—perhaps in Europe—at least half of them, divided be-

tween a reverence for the past and a curiosity as to the future, would sigh, 'I am born a century too late or a century too soon!'

Isaura listened to this answer with a profound and absorbing interest. It was the first time that a clever young man talked thus sympathetically to her, a clever young girl.

Then rising, he said, "I see your *Madre* and our American friends are darting angry looks at me. They have made room for us at the table, and are wondering why I should keep you thus from the good things of this little life. One word more ere we join them—Consult your own mind, and consider whether your uneasiness and unrest are caused solely by conventional shackles on your sex. Are they not equally common to the youth of ours?—common to all who seek in art, in letters, nay, in the stormier field of active life, to clasp as a reality some image yet seen but as a dream?"

CHAPTER VIII.

No further conversation in the way of sustained dialogue took place that evening between Graham and Isaura.

The Americans and the Savarins clustered round Isaura when they quitted the refreshment-room. The party was breaking up. Vane would have offered his arm again to Isaura, but M. Savarin had forestalled him. The American was dispatched by his wife to see for the carriage; and Mrs. Morley said, with her wonted sprightly tone of command,

"Now, Mr. Vane, you have no option but to take care of me to the shawl-room."

Madame Savarin and Signora Venosta had each found their

cavaliers, the Italian still retaining hold of the portly connoisseur, and the Frenchwoman accepting the safeguard of the Vicomte de Brézé. As they descended the stairs, Mrs. Morley asked Graham what he thought of the young lady to whom she had presented him.

"I think she is charming," answered Graham.

"Of course; that is the stereotyped answer to all such questions, especially by you Englishmen. In public or in private, England is the mouthpiece of platitudes."

"It is natural for an American to think so. Every child that has just learned to speak uses bolder expressions than its grandmamma;

but I am rather at a loss to know by what novelty of phrase an American would have answered your question."

"An American would have discovered that Isaura Cicogna had a soul, and his answer would have confessed it."

"It strikes me that he would then have uttered a platitude more stolid than mine. Every Christian knows that the dullest human being has a soul. But, to speak frankly, I grant that my answer did not do justice to the Signorina, nor to the impression she makes on me; and putting aside the charm of the face, there is a charm in a mind that seems to have gathered stores of reflection which I should scarcely have expected to find in a young lady brought up to be a professional singer."

"You add prejudice to platitude, and are horribly prosaic to-night; but here we are in the shawl-room. I must take another opportunity of attacking you. Pray dine with us to-morrow; you will meet our Minister and a few other pleasant friends."

"I suppose I must not say, 'I shall be charmed,'" answered Vane; "but I shall be."

"*Bon Dieu!* that horrid fat man has deserted Signora Venosta—looking for his own cloak, I daresay. Selfish monster!—go and hand her to her carriage—quick, it is announced!"

Graham, thus ordered, hastened to offer his arm to the she-mountain-bank. Somehow she had acquired dignity in his eyes, and he did not feel the least ashamed of being in contact with the scarlet jacket.

The Signora grappled to him with a confiding familiarity.

"I am afraid," she said in Italian, as they passed along the spacious hall to the *porte cochère*—"I am

afraid that I did not make a good effect to-night—I was nervous; did not you perceive it?"

"No, indeed; you enchanted us all," replied the dissimulator.

"How amiable you are to say so!—you must think that I sought for a compliment. So I did—you gave me more than I deserved. Wine is the milk of old men, and praise of old women. But an old man may be killed by too much wine, and an old woman lives all the longer for too much praise—*buona notte*."

Here she sprang, lithesomely enough, into the carriage, and Isaura followed, escorted by M. Savarin. As the two men returned towards the shawl-room, the Frenchman said, "Madame Savarin and I complain that you have not let us see so much of you as we ought. No doubt you are greatly sought after; but are you free to take your soup with us the day after to-morrow? You will meet a select few of my *confrères*."

"The day after to-morrow I will mark with a white stone. To dine with M. Savarin is an event to a man who covets distinction."

"Such compliments reconcile an author to his trade. You deserve the best return I can make you. You will meet *la belle Isaura*. I have just engaged her and her *chaperon*. She is a girl of true genius, and genius is like those objects of *vertu* which belong to a former age, and become every day more scarce and more precious."

Here they encountered Colonel Morley and his wife hurrying to their carriage. The American stopped Vane, and whispered, "I am glad, sir, to hear from my wife that you dine with us to-morrow. Sir, you will meet Mademoiselle Cicogna, and I am not without a kinkle* that you will be enthused."

* A notion.

"This seems like a fatality," soliloquised Vane as he walked through the deserted streets towards his lodging. "I strove to banish that haunting face from my mind. I had half forgotten it, and now——" Here his murmur sank into silence. He was deliberating in very conflicted thought whether or not he should write to refuse the two invitations he had accepted.

"Pooh!" he said at last, as he reached the door of his lodging, "is my reason so weak that it should be influenced by a mere superstition? Surely I know myself too well, and have tried myself too long to fear that I should be untrue to the duty and ends of my life, even if I found my heart in danger of suffering."

Certainly the Fates do seem to mock our resolves to keep our feet from their ambush, and our hearts from their snare.

How our lives may be coloured by that which seems to us the most

trivial accident, the merest chance! Suppose that Alain de Rochebriant had been invited to that *réunion* at M. Louvier's, and Graham Vane had accepted some other invitation and passed his evening elsewhere, Alain would probably have been presented to Isaura—what then might have happened? The impression Isaura had already made upon the young Frenchman was not so deep as that made upon Graham; but then, Alain's resolution to efface it was but commenced that day, and by no means yet confirmed. And if *he* had been the first clever young man to talk earnestly to that clever young girl, who can guess what impression he might have made upon her? His conversation might have had less philosophy and strong sense than Graham's, but more of poetic sentiment and fascinating romance.

However, the history of events that do not come to pass is not in the chronicle of the Fates.

THE SHORES OF BISCAY.

THERE are few sensations more agreeable to the holiday excursionist than that of feeling that he has made a "good cast," and that his few weeks are to turn out a profitable investment so far as sheer animal enjoyment and moral and physical relaxation are concerned; and I hold it to be the duty of every man, whom fortune has so far favoured, to put his hard-worked fellow-man into possession of any secret which accident may have revealed to him. The south-eastern shores of the Bay of Biscay have become tolerably well known since the fascination which Biarritz exercised over the late Empress of the French rendered that agreeable watering-place famous, and the Emperor made it a trysting-spot with Bismarck and others, in which to concoct the plots that have since changed the face of Europe and cost him his crown. And yet this coast, especially after crossing the French frontier into Spain, possesses attractions which have not been done justice to by pleasure-seekers, and which enjoy facilities of access that render them eminently desirable for a summer ramble. But even before leaving France, I know of no seaside retreat more thoroughly enjoyable and unique than Arcachon; that is, if a place can be called on the seaside which is situated on the shores of a lagoon some seventy miles in circumference, the narrow entrance to which is partially concealed by projecting headlands. It is so utterly unlike all other French watering-places, in the habits of the people who frequent it, no less than in its physical characteristics, that it is quite a relief to stumble unexpectedly upon a corner in this civilised part of Europe so fresh

and unconventional. The houses, like Indian Bungalows, with broad verandahs, and often of only one storey, run for more than a mile along the water's edge, each surrounded by its own "compound," to keep up the Indian phraseology, and each with its bathing-house and steps leading down to the beach. From these the lightly-clad inmates emerge at all hours, and pass the greater part of their time either paddling barefoot on the shore when the tide is out, or dancing in groups in the sea, which has the merit, in the eyes of the nervous part of the population, of always being as smooth as a mill-pond. I never saw a place so absolutely and completely given over to bathing. Here are no fashionable Parisian toilets, no esplanade or promenade upon which the gay and "half-world" display their gaudy colours; no boulevards or Bois de Boulogne transported, as it were, bodily to contaminate the pure sea-air, as at Trouville or Biarritz. There is, indeed, a casino set on a hill, which nobody seems to frequent; and there is a huge square abomination, totally out of keeping with every other structure in the place, called the "Grand Hotel," which everybody avoids who can find lodging elsewhere. But apart from these evidences of an advanced state of civilization, everything is primitive in the extreme; and there are hotels where you can run out of your bedroom in your bathing-dress, and feel when you sit down at a long but simply-spread *table-d'hôte*, that everybody is clean, for you have just parted from them in the water. But the real charm of Arcachon lies in its pine-forests, covering sand-dunes sometimes three or four hundred feet high, and stretching back

over the *landes*, where fresh-water lakes glimmer in the blue distance. Picturesquely grouped within these resinous groves are perched the villas and cottages of the winter town, to which consumptive patients resort in the colder months to breathe turpentine mixed with the soft sea-breeze. The extraordinary advantages of this hygienic compound seem to be getting more and more recognised, and each year the number of visitors increases. The high dunes completely shelter the winter town from the violence of the gales, while there is a life and purity in the atmosphere which have worked marvellous results. With a compass one may explore the recesses of these forests for miles on horseback, for there is scarcely any underwood, and one can therefore steer through them in any direction; though in fact there is not much danger of being very seriously lost, for the forest abounds with the wooden shanties of the collectors of turpentine, who are perpetually at work gashing the trees, and emptying the little pots tied on to them, and which contain the sap, into the small tanks prepared to receive it. In the centre of the basin are a couple of sand-banks, one of them partially dry at low water, and on which any number of rabbits may be shot; and on the other an oyster-park, with an old hulk stranded upon it. Large parties of merry-makers sail to this moist and oozy spot, and, taking off their shoes and stockings, catch their own shrimps, gather their own cockles, and knock the oysters off the tiles upon which they are growing for themselves; and then retiring to the hulk, where sundry articles of diet may be purchased, make their cannibal picnic with the addition of these living creatures. There is something dreadful in seeing an oyster enjoying himself with his shell open, all

unsuspicious of danger, and then pouncing upon him, wrenching him from his habitation, and swallowing him quivering, and before he has had time to recover from his astonishment. It is no doubt equally cruel to eat live cockles, but it does not feel so wicked, probably because they are not so large; while, on the other hand, there is a ferocity about cracking a periwinkle between your teeth like a nut, which I have known so-called humane persons heartlessly do, to spare the poor creatures the pain of being forcibly extracted while alive with a pin. Another pleasing entertainment, much resorted to by both sexes, is spearing fish by torchlight. On a dark night the bay is sometimes brightly illuminated with the glare of the pine-splinters flaming from the prows of boats in iron cradles, and the shouts of laughter tell of unsuccessful prods with many-pronged spears at the eels and mullet which wriggle or dart round the bright reflection on the water. It requires considerable skill and practice to bring home a large basketful, but some ladies become tolerably expert at this sport. Then there are excursions to the lighthouse and the "Grande Mer," where the Atlantic rolls its full force on the long line of sea-beach, unbroken by bay or indentation; and there are fresh-water lakes to visit, lying in the heart of the *landes*, where the peasants still watch their flocks on stilts, and the manners and customs of the people are exactly where they were hundreds of years ago. They are destined soon to change, however, for the whole of this vast sandy region is being covered with pine-woods, with which it is being planted to prevent the sands from moving; and the population will have to change their pastoral habits for those of turpentine-gatherers, a prospect which does not transport them, and they have

taken to burning down the pine-woods in consequence. I have seen large tracts of country thus charred and blackened; nor is it possible to say, when a fire of this kind once gets fairly the mastery, where the material is so inflammable, what damage may be done before its progress can be arrested. It is strange in the most remote and desolate spots, miles, perhaps, from the nearest habitation, suddenly to come upon a notice stuck on a tree forbidding the lighting of lucifer-matches, or smoking altogether. These vast plantations entirely rob the *landes* of their once distinctive character. Speeding southwards by railway, one might be traversing South Carolina or Florida, so exactly does the scenery, in its flatness, dreariness, and vegetation, resemble those States; and it is a comfort to find one's self face to face with the Pyrenees at last, and as we approach the frontier, to see them extending far as the eye can reach along the northern coast of Spain.

To those who prefer fine scenery and quiet to fine dresses and fashion, San Jean de Luz possesses many attractions over Biarritz as a watering-place; but there is one institution, a few miles distant from the latter, which has no connection whatever either with sea-bathing or casinos, but which will well repay a visit. In the midst of a sandy waste of pine-forest, not very far from Bayonne, stands a pile of substantial buildings, of no architectural merit, surrounded by fields and gardens which are in striking contrast to the barren aspect of the adjacent country. This establishment is called the Refuge; its history is curious and interesting. About forty years ago a philanthropic priest of Bayonne became deeply interested in the condition of unfortunate women with whom his labours had brought him from time

to time into contact, and he proposed to three or four of them, who expressed an earnest desire for reformation, to establish themselves in a cottage in the country, and to seek to gain their livelihood by their own work, promising them at the same time all the aid and protection which it was in his power to offer them. Not only did the experiment succeed so far as the poor women themselves were concerned, but they soon desired to see their numbers increased and their sphere of usefulness enlarged. They interested themselves in the poor peasantry by whom they were surrounded, tended the sick, and performed other works of mercy. It now became evident that their good intentions might be stimulated, and their labours more profitably directed, by the addition to their number of nuns who had entered the religious life from quite a different class, and who had been trained to its exercise. The establishment speedily grew under this twofold influence. On the occasion of my visit it contained upwards of 500 inmates, of whom 150 were *filles repenties* and the rest nuns; the former cannot become nuns except under special circumstances, which I shall describe presently.

The whole of this vast establishment has from the beginning supported itself without any extraneous charitable aid; and though at first it passed through sundry pecuniary crises, it weathered them all successfully, and is now financially flourishing. The lady superior told us wonderful stories of the marvellous, and, as it appeared to her, direct manner in which Providence had come to the assistance of this good work in the various critical periods through which it had passed, and pointed with a justifiable pride and satisfaction to the present results. Here were work-rooms where the silent occupants, in their plain blue

dresses and white caps, were busily stitching; and there, in an adjoining room, neatly displayed under glass, or packed away in the drawers with which the whole apartment was lined, were the most delicately-executed results of their handiwork, in the shape of embroidered and open-worked ladies' garments, mysterious articles, with all kinds of frills and lace, made to go under their other clothes, and show here and there, or not at all. I cannot pretend to call these objects by their names, or go into further particulars, beyond the fact that the workmanship, to my inexperienced eye, seemed marvellous; and so indeed it was declared to be by the ladies of the party. So celebrated is it, that the community receive orders from all parts of France for more than they can supply, and derive from this source alone a large income. Another very profitable source of industry is in the hothouses and nurseries of ornamental plants, which their proximity to Biarritz enables the sisters to supply to the numerous villa-proprietors, who all have their little bit of decorative gardening to attend to. This branch had evidently reached a high pitch of perfection; and both hothouse and nursery was kept in admirable order, and well stocked with the plants of meridional Europe. The kitchen garden was also a success, though it did not bring such large profits; and on the farm outside, composed of many acres of maize, beans, and other crops, I saw the *filles repenties* hard at work; for the sincerity of their repentance is subjected to no slight test. Hard physical labour in the fields all day, and wholesome but exceedingly simple diet, is the only lot they have to look forward to; and it shows how truly they must loathe the life they have been compelled to lead, that they

should voluntarily submit to an existence which is not very far removed from imprisonment with hard labour. Of course they are treated with the utmost care and tenderness by the nuns, to whom they are said to be devotedly attached; and we were informed that, though their stay was voluntary, they seldom got tired of it and left. The orphans are generally the children of poor peasants, and are taken in and educated here until they are old enough to go out into service; when, if they feel that they have no vocation for a religious life, places are found for them with good and charitable people. There is always a large demand for servants from the Refuge, as it is a guarantee of their having been well and carefully brought up. It is scarcely needful to say that they are kept apart from the *filles repenties*. The dairy is a well-kept and profitable branch of the farming operations, the butter fetching three francs a-pound, and commanding an unlimited sale. Then there were extensive pig-sties and hundreds of tame rabbits, all which furnished abundant occupation to the inmates. In one place I saw half-a-dozen stalwart girls on a dung-heap loading a cart with manure, and pitchforking it in with a strength that many men might have envied. For ploughing and certain parts of farm service we were told that hired male labour had to be employed. About half a mile from the Refuge, and buried still more deeply in the recesses of the pine-woods, is a branch establishment, which is, however, more interesting than the parent from which it sprang. About twenty-five years ago there lived on this spot a poor old man in a little reed hut. His only means of livelihood was a few vines that derived their feeble sustenance from the sandy soil in which they grew. An invalid for many years, this solitary peasant had

been an object of constant care and solicitude to the sisters of the Refuge; and when at length he died, he left his little property to them. This necessitated the residence in it of one or two sisters, who thus led a life of almost hermit solitude while taking care of the little place. This was found to be so favourable to the development of the devotional instinct, that those who had experienced its good effect requested to be allowed not only to stay, but to add to their number, adopting the rules of the order of St. Bernard, which impose absolute silence. Hence, while their sisters in the Refuge are called "Servantes de Marie," these have adopted the name of "Bernardines," and now number in all over sixty. It was impossible to open the little wicker-gate which led into the enclosure dedicated to the religious life of these silent sisters, and to look at the little grass hut which was the origin of their life here, and not to feel impressed by the atmosphere of repose, simplicity, and devotion which seemed to pervade everything. Here, at all events, however selfish may be the fundamental idea which has induced these women, for the sake of saving their own souls, to submit themselves to a species of moral and intellectual torture, the personal motive is redeemed by the fact that there is an active work going on. They are not, as is the case in so many of these Orders, devoted only to prayer and meditation, but make petticoats or rear plants for the ultimate benefit of other people's bodies as well as their own souls. I therefore felt they were entitled to a respect to which a barren asceticism can lay no claim, and gazed with a curious fascination at these silent figures moving about in their hooded long white garb, a most inconvenient one for gardening, as it reaches to the feet. The hood fall-

ing over the face completely conceals it. As it is impossible to manage hothouses and a nursery-garden without somebody saying something, some of the sisters come from the Refuge to direct operations, and several of the *filles repenties* come as day labourers to do the harder work. The same industries are carried on at the Bernardines as at the Refuge, but there is a great deal more prayer. Every hour the air seems to resound with a low murmur, which lasts several minutes. For as it strikes, those tending plants fall on their knees wherever they may be, and chant in low tones; while under the trees, in a little flower-garden, are a group of eight or ten sitting two or three yards apart from each other; and one standing motionless, with bent head, murmurs the prayer, to which all the others, with fingers plying nimbly on their needle-work the while, in low sweet chant respond. This general hum of devotion in the midst of all their occupations produces a strange effect, which is enhanced by the impossibility of catching a sight of any one of their faces, and the singular attitudes in which they place themselves, so that their attention should not under any possible circumstances be distracted. Thus they are very fond of sitting in an angle of a wall, with their faces turned toward the angle, or in little bosquets or bowers, with their backs turned to the entrance; so that, as a general rule, the back view is almost the only one to be obtained of a Bernardine. We examined their little cells or bedrooms, which were at first all made of grass and reeds, but are now substantially constructed of brick and mortar, though the old ones are left standing. Some of them have lived this life for twenty-three or twenty-four years, never uttering a word during the whole of that time, excepting to the

lady superiors when they were ill, or once-a-week to the priest at confession. As a general rule, they are short-lived, the poor food, absence of fire, dampness of their cells, and general privations, render them *poitrinaire*; and they die generally after a few years, either of consumption or a species of wasting away. I was anxious to find out whether the peculiar brain-starvation to which they were subjected produced any effect upon their mind, that corresponded with this physical inanition; but this was eagerly and emphatically denied; and we were assured that any mental weakness would certainly be discovered either by the superior or the confessor, and that no such case had occurred. They are allowed no coffee, tea, or milk, their morning meal consisting of a soup of vegetables cooked in oil: their dinner of one slice of meat, with bread, and their supper of a bowl of soup. We looked into their refectory, an earthen platter, bowl, and spoon for each person, on a rude table without a cloth, composed the whole dinner service. About half the Bernardines are *filles repenties*; these latter being permitted, after undergoing two years' probation, to join this order, though they are not allowed to become *Servantes de Marie*. It is worthy of remark that the *filles repenties* devote themselves to this austere life in a much larger proportion to their numbers than the nuns themselves. In the garden of the Refuge is the tomb of the good priest who founded the establishment, and who only died in '68, after having for forty years had the satisfaction of seeing the seed which he had planted in the wilderness bring forth its valuable fruit. There can be no doubt that had all monastic orders been, like this one, productive institutions, they would not have undergone the persecution which has befallen them in

various countries, and notably in Spain, where they have contributed to the poverty rather than to the material prosperity of the country. If, instead of banishing monks, the Government were to make them support themselves by the work of their hands, and do their charity with their own money instead of that which they have extorted from others, they would not be the unpopular class they are. The decaying monasteries which I afterwards saw in Spain formed a striking contrast to this sad-looking but prosperous little industrial community.

We were here not a couple of hours from the Spanish frontier, where, indeed, new sensations of all sorts are in store for us. In the first place, on entering Spain the traveller is struck, not merely with the bad management on the railways, with which he instantly comes into painful and violent collision, but with the utter ignorance even on the part of the officials appointed to do duty on the French frontier of any language but Spanish; and he has an opportunity of learning at once a lesson which he will do well not to forget throughout his rambles in Spain, that he will only increase his difficulties tenfold by losing his temper. The best plan, when nature comes to his aid, as at Irun or Hendaye, is to look at the lovely view until he regains it. He will go far before he will see anything more ideal than the magnificent sweep of the mountains which curve round the south-eastern corner of the Bay of Biscay, or find in Spain a town more thoroughly Spanish than the quaint old tumbling-down frontier fortress of Fuentarabia, perched on its conical hill, with its ramparts falling to decay, and its narrow streets and picturesque antique mansions telling of a civilisation that has passed away; or when speeding

on still further, he comes suddenly upon Passages, and finds Balacava reproduced, with its perfectly land-locked little harbour and lofty cliffs overhanging the narrow entrance. The Emperor perceived at a glance the enormous advantages which such a port, distant only nine miles from France, would be to that country, and rumour has credited him with sundry projects for annexing it; but all danger to Spain on this score has passed away, and a company has been quite recently formed for dredging the harbour, which has been allowed to silt up since we occupied it for two or three years during the Carlist war of 1835; and it is further proposed to connect it by a line of railway directly with Barcelona. There can be little doubt that Passages, instead of being a deserted inlet as it is at present, might become a port of great importance. There is no harbour equal to it upon the whole extent of the north coast of Spain, and the produce of some of the richest provinces would here find an outlet, which the miserable little port of San Sebastian fails to supply; while, if the railway were completed, cargoes which now make an immense detour round by the Straits of Gibraltar to the east coast, might be here unloaded. Only four miles from San Sebastian, it is evident that Passages would also become the harbour of that flourishing and rapidly-increasing town.

Within the last few years San Sebastian has become far too civilised a watering place to tempt one to linger longer there than is necessary to see its sights. As in many of these northern Spanish towns, there is the old town and the new—the new overlooking the bathing machines, after the manner of Margate or Scarborough, and as like all other modern towns as it is possible to make it. The latest attraction

which has been added is the house recently purchased by Gambetta, and which he bought probably with the object of making it his Chiselhurst, after he has fulfilled his inevitable destiny of being elected President of the French Republic, and then being ignominiously kicked out of it. The charm of San Sebastian lies in the beauty of its situation and the historical associations connected with it which the external change it is undergoing cannot destroy. If, instead of building new glaring houses, the population would prove their progress in civilisation by renewing beds, the creeping inhabitants of which have carefully retained the tastes of their ancestors, and abolishing bull-fights, the enlightened citizens of San Sebastian would show a far truer appreciation of what civilisation really means. It was quite a relief to get into the narrow cool streets where the sun never penetrates; where señoritas lean over the balconies and look down with bright black eyes at the upturned countenances of their admirers; where the overhanging eaves send the rain in a river down the centre of the street; where the smells of a by-gone age have still a right to linger; and where, if one has the inconveniences of barbarism, one has at least the charm of antiquity. Hitherto civilisation in Spain, so far as I have been able to judge, means the getting rid of everything old that was national, characteristic, and worth keeping, and the retaining of everything that is cruel, greasy, and dirty. The King had only left San Sebastian on the morning of our arrival, and the city was in its gala attire, or rather undergoing the process of being undressed. The triumphal arches were yet standing, but the drapery had been removed from the balconies, and the poles with flags

were being taken down. The city was still under the recent excitement, however, and every mouth was full of the event. The general impression was decidedly favourable to the young King, whom the people had never seen before, and regarding whom they had heard all sorts of the most exaggerated stories. He had won their hearts by his frank affable manner and his perfect fearlessness. Their sympathy was all the warmer, as they felt the task he had undertaken to be impossible. Threatened with assassination, he had made it a point to walk out alone in the most crowded thoroughfares; he had ordered the arrest of all who were found illegally gambling at the casino; he had bathed in the surf like an ordinary mortal; and, indeed, the opposition papers took advantage of the circumstance to spread a lying story of his not being properly clad upon the occasion; but in spite of his enemies, he had made himself popular. If the reception on his arrival had been enthusiastic, there was still more sympathy manifested at his departure; and when we consider that the province of which San Sebastian is the capital is the hotbed of Carlism, the political success of the royal visit here was evidently greater than could have been anticipated. In the evening the whole population of San Sebastian seems to turn out on the Paseo, which separates the old town from the new. One side of this promenade is devoted to the wealth and fashion, and the other to the poverty and *vi pollés*. They seem quite to understand their respective positions, and to keep on their own sides; of the two, the plebeian was the most characteristic. San Sebastian is too near France for its upper classes to seem very different in dress and appearance from the French *bourgeoisie*. Beyond the mantilla there is nothing to dis-

tinguish them; but when the music begins, then comes out the national propensity of the lower orders, and half the promenaders on the common side take incontinently to snapping their fingers, if they have no castanets, and dancing. The band played nothing but dance tunes, or at all events the people managed to dance to every tune, sometimes a redowa polka step, but more often the "jota," which it seems possible to dance to almost anything. As in all Spanish towns, the habits of the population are late; but as the insects keep one awake at any rate, one is the better able to stand the liveliness of the rest of the inhabitants. The most charming walk at San Sebastian is round the Monte Argullo, a steep wooded hill about 400 feet high, surmounted by a castle, the whole forming a lofty promontory. Upon the isthmus connecting it with the mainland the town is situated, the old quarter nestling under the rock, the new part spreading itself over the level neck; while the two deep bays, into one of which the river Urumea empties itself, nearly meet behind it. A magnificent confused range of mountains forms the background; their wild inaccessible valleys have, until within the last few weeks, been the theatre of the late Carlist guerilla warfare, and into their recesses we proposed, with as little delay as possible, now to plunge.

There are two roads leading from San Sebastian to Bilbao; the most interesting as well as the most picturesque is that which leaves the coast at the new watering-place of Zaraus, and then strikes inland. The precipitous nature of the whole of this part of the Spanish coast makes it impossible, indeed, for any road to follow it closely; and immediately after leaving San Sebastian we lose sight of the sea, crossing a high spur upon which is situated the

old fort of Ernani, and descending somewhat abruptly into the lovely valley traversed by the Oriz, which we cross where a picturesque old village is perched upon its steep bank, and, making another climb, descend into the valley of the Deva. About fifteen miles from San Sebastian is situated the new watering-place of Zaraus, rapidly rising into fashionable importance. Many of the wealthy families of Madrid have villas here, and the beauty of the scenery adds its attraction to its sandy beach and fresh bracing climate. But Zaraus has not attained a sufficiently advanced stage of civilisation to furnish a better hotel than the *fonda* of the old town, the primitive antique simplicity of which afforded a greater charm as a feature in the landscape than as a residence; so, resisting all temptation to make a closer acquaintance with it, we turned up the lovely valley of the Urola to the baths of Cestona. Every mile now introduced us to new and fresh beauties of scenery—the mountains became more lofty, rugged, and precipitous, now and then the steep hillsides closing in and forming a gorge through which the brawling stream, famed for trout, forced its way, now opening into rich valleys where Indian corn was the prevailing crop. The town of Cestona, with its quaint old church, its rugged brown stone houses, with dilapidated balconies overhung with creepers, or laden with the bright-coloured clothing of the inmates hung out to dry, is situated about a mile lower down the valley than the Baths, and was the first really good specimen of an old-fashioned country town we had seen. The Baths themselves are too much shut in, and too damp and dreary-looking, to make as desirable headquarters for a mountain excursion as we anticipated; so we pushed

on to the still more characteristic old town of Azpettia, which we enter through an old archway; for the town is surrounded by walls, in which are four gateways. The streets are so narrow that there seems scarcely room for the diligence to pass between the projecting balconies; and perched up among the luggage on the roof we could have shaken hands on either side with the black-eyed señoritas, who ran out to see the great event of the day, the passage past their windows of the old-fashioned public conveyance, which is likely to rumble for many years to come over the ill-paved streets. Almost overhanging the town on the right is mount Izarraiz, a huge, bare, granite mass, rising to a height of from three to four thousand feet above the sea. The great majority of the population of this most quaint and picturesque old town, amounting to nearly 6000, is Carlist, and some skirmishes took place about six weeks before our visit in its immediate neighbourhood; but nowhere could the collisions which occurred between those guerilla bands and the Government troops be dignified by the name of fighting. We saw here posts of National Guards, a force not to be confounded in their origin with those who bear the same name in France, but forming part of the regular army, and anti-Carlist in their sympathies to a man. In the late skirmishes they have given the most undoubted and tangible proofs of their loyalty, and the speedy and easy suppression of the insurrection is mainly due to their conduct. The same cannot be said of the civil guards, who correspond to what is generally understood by national guards, and who look like the least respectable class of citizens in their ordinary dress carrying muskets: indeed there seems, so far as outward appearance goes, nothing to

distinguish them from disreputable insurgents. There are many reasons why the Basque Provinces should be the hotbed of Carlism; but possibly the sympathies of Azpeitia in a movement so strongly clerical may not be uninfluenced by the fact that it possesses a religious prestige of its own, which may identify it with the Ultramontane party. In its parish church may still be seen the font at which Ignatius Loyola was baptised, the silver cover of which was carried off by the French in 1794; and it is a popular shrine for pilgrimages in the neighbourhood. But the grand features of the valley are the Santa Casa and convent, which now mark the birthplace of the great founder of the Jesuit order, about a mile from Azpeitia, from which it is approached by a broad straight road leading up the centre of this lovely valley. The church is hemmed in by the frowning bare rocks of Mont Izarraiz on one side, and by rich hillsides, cultivated with maize or clothed with pendulous forests. There is something in the solitary and romantic position of this celebrated edifice, which, apart from its architectural pretensions and most interesting associations, cannot fail to produce a strong impression upon the stranger coming unexpectedly upon it for the first time. The house, and even the room in which the illustrious priest first saw the light, now three hundred and eighty years ago, are still carefully and religiously preserved. Here is the chapel in which he recovered from the wounds received at the battle of Pampelona, where St. Peter is supposed to have descended to him, and where he decided to exchange his military career for one still more militant, though in another garb and under another name. The convent encloses the former residence of the Loyola family, and, together with the chapel, which is

built in the Palladian style, with a façade, and surmounted by a lofty dome, forms an *ensemble* that contrasts strongly, not merely with the strange solitude in the midst of which it rises, but with the architecture to which the eye has become accustomed in the towns and villages of this part of Spain. Although the day of pilgrimages seems to be rapidly passing away, there is still a considerable number of devotees who, towards the end of July, attend the festival held at that period in honour of St. Ignatius. A little further up this celebrated valley we are warned that a long and steep ascent is before us by an addition to our train, which now consists of four horses, two mules, and four bullocks, and we slowly crawl up a most romantic mountain-pass, attaining finally a height of 2500 feet. The view from each zigzag becomes more beautiful as we look over the valleys and ridges we have traversed, and the mountains piled upon one another in the dim distance. We are partially shaded from the blazing sun by the hanging woods with which the steep hillside is covered, and which are composed chiefly of Spanish chestnut, birch, oak, and beech; while the peasantry seem to perch their farms by preference near the summits of the highest hills; and the smoke of burning weeds, the tinkle of cattle-bells, and the occasional sound of distant voices, remind us that we are traversing a populous country, which is under the hand of man, even if some of the methods of its cultivation are rude and primitive in the extreme. There were, indeed, no evidences lacking of this latter fact. The quaint old wooden ploughs, in which the oxen were yoked, but which scarcely seemed to scratch the surface of the ground; the tiny little harrows which certainly could not break it up afterwards; the horses

treading out the grain; the primitive method of winnowing the corn laid in rows by the roadside at the entrance to the towns,—were all signs of a backwardness which, if we had time to examine it more closely, might have furnished many curious and interesting features. All along this road the one unmistakable sign of the Carlist insurrection was the state of the telegraph wires, which were either hanging helplessly from the posts, or had been cut and carried across the road and fastened to trees. From the look of things the Government has no intention of repairing them, but will keep them for the future, in districts liable to be disturbed, upon the line of railway. As there are no cross-country railways in Spain, this plan is attended with manifest inconvenience and expense. The view from the top of the pass over the country into which we were about to descend, was no less beautiful than that over the region we had traversed. Behind us lay the province of Guipuscoa, before us, the province of Viscaya, and far beneath us, by the side of a shining stream, Elgiobar, the frontier town. We were not long in galloping down the hill we had so laboriously ascended, and rattling over its uneven streets. Here the town seemed to hug the brawling river, and balcony over balcony rose from its abrupt margin to a height of five or six storeys, one more rickety than another, and laden with so much hanging linen, to say nothing of spectators, that one feared every moment to see the whole picturesque mass tumble headlong into the stream together. And so on through a country more fertile and smiling as we advance to Eybar, where the whole population, also on the bank of a river, seemed to be engaged in making rifles and revolvers—for here was the Government small-arm factory,

fitted with English machinery, under English management—to the important town of Durango, which may be considered the centre of the Carlist movement. Here for two months they held their headquarters; and a month had not elapsed since, much to the discontent of the population, who are Carlist to the backbone, they found themselves once more under an established Government official. Durango has been at all times the most important military position in Carlist operations. In the movement before the last, Don Carlos made it his headquarters, and from it issued his celebrated proclamation, condemning all foreigners to death without trial who should be found in arms against him,—a decree which was directed against the British Legion, some of whose most remarkable exploits took place in this neighbourhood. From a picturesque as well as from an historical point of view, it is one of the most interesting towns in Viscaya. The extreme antiquity of its church, with its gigantic side portico covering the market place like an umbrella, gives it a character of its own; while there are many interesting excursions to be made in its vicinity. It is only seventeen miles from Durango to Bilbao, but the insurgents never managed to do more than threaten the inhabitants of the latter city. The road runs down the rich valley, affording, as it crosses a ridge near the town, a magnificent view of the basin of the Nervion, upon which it is situated; striking the Vittoria and Bilbao railway not far from the entrance to the capital of Viscaya. From this point one may either return into France by the magnificently-engineered line which, with numerous curves and zigzags, traverses the Sierra to Miranda; or if one can afford a few more days, they are well spent in following the coast by

diligence from Bilbao to Santander, by a road scarped out of the sides of steep mountains overhanging the sea, which climbs ridges, dips into lovely valleys, and passes through picturesque villages, notably Castro Urdiales and Santofia.

It is rather curious in these days, when the French papers for the last two years have been harping upon the spoliation and outrages committed by the Germans in France, to listen to the traditions of the atrocities committed by the French in Spain during the Peninsular war. This northern coast especially seems to have been pillaged and devastated by a ferocious soldiery. According to Ford, this little town of Castro Urdiales was sacked by Foy under circumstances of unusual atrocity. The French troops, after plundering the town, marched out of it with babies stuck upon their bayonets. The sack of Oviedo lasted three days, when sacrilege was the least crime committed. We are all familiar with the sack of Zaragoza by Marshal Lannes, who, after plundering, pillaging, and massacring to his heart's content, put his more important prisoners to death by prolonged torture. At Salamanca, Ney and Mar-mont destroyed thirteen out of twenty-five convents, and twenty out of twenty-five colleges, which existed there. Indeed, there is scarcely any important city held by the French which does not bear marks of having suffered at their hands; and in the museum at Valladolid it is interesting to examine the collection of monuments, sculptures, pictures, and ornaments, stripped from desecrated churches by the invaders, but which they had not time to carry off. Nothing perpetrated by the Germans in the late war can bear comparison in ruthless violence with the conduct of the French soldiery in Spain; and one is astounded at the un-

blushing effrontery with which the French have ventured to complain of acts strictly in accordance with their own method of warfare.

The road leaves the coast at Santofia, and passes through a glorious piece of mountain scenery to the head of the bay, and opposite Santander, from which point one may be ferried over. A large transatlantic steamer, the Panama, was lying on a rock when I visited the spot; and her crew, camped on the shore in huts hastily improvised out of sails, formed a picturesque, if somewhat melancholy, feature in the scene. Excepting, perhaps, the Semmering, I know nothing finer in the way of a railway mountain-pass than the ascent of the Sierra from the coast to Reinos. The road ascends in less than fifty miles to a height of 3229 feet above the sea, passing during the last twenty miles through no fewer than twenty-two tunnels. It may readily be imagined what gorges we dive into, what sharp curves we make, what magnificent panoramic views we obtain, and how full of interest, from a purely professional and engineering point of view, our journey over these lofty ridges at the tail of a locomotive must necessarily be, until at last we find ourselves upon the bleak raw plateau of Old Castile, with its cheerless towns dotted over the barren plains—conspicuous among them its chief city, Valladolid. I am now on too beaten a track to make any description of this well-known city necessary; but here, as elsewhere in Spanish towns, one of the first objects that meets the eye is the Plaza de Toros, and no traveller in Spain would feel that he had done his duty unless he had been present at a *fiesta de toros*, or bullfight. If I am tempted now to convey to your readers the impression which this inhuman and utter-

ly uninteresting spectacle produced upon me, it is only because I am surprised at not having found it more universally experienced by the numerous travellers who have witnessed and described Spanish bull-fights. There is a general concurrence as to the cruelty of the proceedings; but the true objection to it seems to me to lie rather in the sporting than what may be termed the moral view of the question. So long as we keep it upon this ground, it may fairly be said to be a matter of appreciation; and the Spanish replies to our charges of its cruelty by quoting that which attaches to every kind of sport, fall to the ground. The agony of the chased fox, the sufferings of the wounded deer, the preservation of small game for the purpose of slaying it in *battues* for amusement, and in a manner calculated to cause much unnecessary torture, seem to them not very different from the suffering of the animals engaged in the sport usually called bull-fighting, but which ought more properly to be termed bull-baiting; though even here the parallel fails; for the sportsmen kill their own game, instead of paying to be allowed to see the keepers do it. But they find their most triumphant argument in the prize-ring, forgetting that if bull-baiting was, like prize-fighting, against the law, instead of being encouraged by the Spanish Government, no foreigner would be entitled to say a word against it. As regards the question of whether cruelty is justified by sport, or whether there is not a limit beyond which the amusement to be derived from the excitement which generally goes by that name, becomes demoralising to those who participate in it, this is one not necessary to go into, because bull-baiting is not sport at all. It possesses neither of the two essential elements of sport, danger

or uncertainty, nor is it engaged in by sportsmen, but by paid servants. To a true sportsman it produces not the slightest emotion or excitement; and after the first quarter of an hour I felt so bored, that had I had a newspaper in my pocket, I should have preferred reading it to watching the stupid exhibition which seemed to madden the audience with excitement—an excitement which appeared to me to depend entirely, not on the skill and address of those concerned, for there was very little variety in this, but in the amount of blood which they contrived to cause to be spilt. The most picturesque moment of the *spectacle*, to those who look at it for the first time, is the entry of the combatants into the arena before the bull makes his appearance. There is a gorgeous, middle-age sort of pageantry about this part of the performance which carries one back to the days of jousts and tournaments, when men had the pluck to tilt at each other instead of paying experts to tilt at bulls. The *Chulos*, glittering in spangles and carrying their red cloaks, have a sort of half-harlequin, half-chivalrous appearance; while the *Picadors*, on their gaunt *Rosinantes*, are complete personifications of Don Quixote. The number of horses and the number of bulls to be killed during the afternoon is all arranged beforehand. A bull-fight is a good one—that is, an expensive one—according to the terms of the contract with the man who supplies the horses. It is his interest, of course, that his horses, which are miserable hacks, should not be killed; but the audience pay to see them killed, and roar and yell if they do not get their money's worth, calling out loudly, "*La tripa!*" "*La tripa!*"—*Entrails! Entrails!* The function of the *Picador* is to goad the bull into disembowelling his horse; that is, if

he is a doomed horse, otherwise the death of a horse is by no means necessary to the death of the bull, which it would be quite easy for the dozen men who surround the animal to kill in two minutes, if the mob did not insist upon his torture being prolonged to twenty. The legs of the Picador being encased in iron and leather, he runs practically no risk whatever. The bull, with head down, charges the horse, which, being blindfolded, stands unconscious of the danger until he feels the horns of the animal in his belly. The Picador lifts his leg and slides off, or is perhaps thrown with the horse; but the bull is immediately lured off by the Chulos, and soon becomes completely bewildered and confused by the constant red mantles which are thrown in his face, and which he charges blindly and wildly with his head down. The address and agility of the Chulos in springing on one side is pretty to see, but one soon ceases to feel that they incur any danger; and in point of fact accidents seldom happen; if they did, it would excuse the bull-fights from the charge of not being sport. If there was a probability of some one being killed, there would be some interest in looking on. Indeed, Spaniards defend their favourite amusement on the ground that the men are so rarely injured, and that the horses are not worth much. Unfortunately a cheap animal is as conscious of pain as an expensive one; and the very fact that the men are so dexterous and numerous that the bull has not a chance against them, robs the whole proceeding of that danger and uncertainty which constitutes sport. I longed to see a dozen of the yelling mob turned in to do battle with the unfortunate animal, which, no matter how bravely he fought, was foredoomed, and had no chance of victory or escape. When

wearied and worn out with the incessant goading of the Picadors, he stands still, and seems only to ask to be left alone; the audience yell for blood, then a Picador advances on his blindfolded horse to within a yard of the wretched bull, gives him a violent prod with his goad—a spear which is so made that it cannot penetrate above an inch—at the same moment lifting his leg, and thus induces the bull to plunge his horns into his horse's bowels. When these fall to the ground, and the horse is led out tramping upon them, the applause is frantic; but I failed to see that the origin of it lay in any such sentiment as we call sport. It may, for instance, give a pleasurable sensation of excitement to certain natures to avoid being scratched while skinning a live cat, but the difficulty and dangers of the operation would scarcely cause it to be dignified with the name of sport. At Bilbao, the pleasure to the people used formerly to be enhanced by the horses being driven alive in this horrible condition into the river, and allowed to struggle before a considerable crowd of spectators until they were drowned; and I have myself seen a large crowd watching with interest the protracted agonies of a drowning dog in the harbour of San Sebastian, and a child run with a dying kitten and fling it under the wheels of a cart, for the pleasure of seeing it run over. Whether bull-fights are responsible for these traits of character, or the result of them, I know not; but I watched with a painful interest the excitement produced by this butchery in numerous children of both sexes, and of the most tender age, and the strange fascination which the bloody drama evidently exercised over the fairer portion of the spectators, who seemed to gloat over its horrors. Sport involving the slaughter of animals, as a general rule, is a

pastime in which it is not possible for women and children to engage, for it calls for the display of certain manly qualities; but it is not necessary to possess any of the attributes of a man to be a constant attendant at bull-fights; indeed, courage and manliness should tend rather to prevent men from tolerating them. When the bull has killed the number of horses which from the first he was intended to kill, and is himself streaming with blood from the shoulders and withers, the Chulos dance round him like hornets, planting with great dexterity in that already lacerated region their banderilleros,—barbed darts with little flags attached. In a few minutes the wretched animal has a large handful of these sticking in his back, and, wild with pain, he charges blindly in every direction without the slightest chance of inflicting any injury on his nimble persecutors, who wax bold, catch him by the tail, and are swung round amid the plaudits of the spectators, or perform the still more difficult *tour de force* of seeming almost to spring over the animal's head as he stoops to toss them. When these feats are witnessed for the first time, they excite the interest incidental to every skilful and apparently dangerous performance; but one quickly perceives that, however difficult they may seem to the uninitiated, they are, in fact, no more dangerous than the tight-rope or the flying trapeze, and they soon become monotonous. When, with a quiverful of arrows in his back, the bull is sufficiently worn out with agony, the turn of the Matador comes. This gentleman keeps on plunging a long sword, like a rapier, into the nape of the animal's neck. This is a service said to be attended with some danger, though it seemed to me a tolerably safe performance; and I was assured these execution-

ers were rarely injured, the Chulos always coming to his rescue. If, as in the bull-fight which I witnessed, the Matador does not happen to be a very skilful operator, he makes a good many rash shots, and, after plunging his sword deeply into the animal, is obliged to relinquish the hilt. He then has cautiously to advance so as to draw it from the wound; but the audience does not object to this: on the contrary, a well-planted blow, which severs the spinal marrow of the bull at the first attempt, seems rather to disappoint them, as it curtails his dying agonies. To butchers, were butchery elevated to a fine art, the whole exhibition might contain elements of interest and enjoyment; but no man who knows what sport means, who has himself ever felt the keen excitement of being face to face with the denizens of Indian forests, or even of a ride across country after a fox, can, after the novelty of the first bull, feel anything but disgust and *ennui*. The danger incurred by the Picadors is nothing to that of a good day's pig-sticking. The Matador in the presence of a rogue elephant, much less a tiger on foot, would give his ears to be safe back in front of his bull, while the Chulos would find riding straight to hounds attended with a good deal more risk than hopping over the barriers whenever they find the bull charging them. As for the audience, who pay professionals to do their sport for them, they have about as much idea of what sport really means, as an Indian prince who pays natch-girls to dance before him, has of dancing a Highland fling himself.

Finally, though willing merely for the sake of argument to grant that real sport may justify any amount of cruelty, I am obliged, after seeing a Spanish bull fight, to conclude that the spectators de-

lighted in it, not because it was sport, but because it was cruel. How else are we to account for that passionate cry, "La tripa! La tripa!" As for the incidental evils, as I am writing, not from the moralist, but the sporting point of view, I do not enter upon them, though I am assured by the Spaniards themselves that for weeks before and after a bull-fight in the country towns, the effect upon all classes of the population is most deleterious. This, however, may be said to a great extent of our own races. Spaniards themselves are so accustomed to this exhibition, that it is impossible for them to form any idea of the impression it is calculated to produce upon the foreigner witnessing it for the first time. I am happy to have met many of the nation who hold it in utter abhorrence, and I am assured by them that the taste for it is rapidly dying out, and that among the upper classes there is a considerable current of public opinion setting in this direction. The sooner it is supported by the voice of civilised Europe the better; for however much we all have need to reform our popular amusements, there is none of them which can be considered a greater blot upon European civilisation than a Spanish bull-fight.

When we had visited the house in which Columbus lived and died, the lower storey of which is now a dairy, and wandered over the interminable Alamedas and under the Arcades, supported by old well-worn granite columns which date from the days when this city was called by the Moors *Belad-Waled*, we are quite ready to leave it—and so traverse more dried-up steppe country to Burgos, a nest of ultra-Carlism and clerical fanaticism, with its crumbling old fortress overlooking its marvellous cathedral, its tiny river of soap-suds trickling be-

tween ostentatious quays, and its long deserted avenues of trees under which nobody ever seems to walk, abundantly supplied with stone seats upon which no one ever sits. It is a type of that desolation and decay which pervades everything in Spain, and which extends especially to its churches and monasteries. There is an excellent specimen of a deserted Carthusian monastery a few miles from Burgos, worth visiting if only to see the wonderful work of art which it contains in the shape of an elaborately and most exquisitely carved alabaster monument to Don Juan II. and his wife Isabel of Portugal. But the real interest of Miraflores consists in the evidence which its deserted cells afford of the decline of a religion which once exercised its paramount and sanguinary influence over the whole Peninsula. All over the country, in its most picturesque and inaccessible spots, these gaunt piles are now to be seen, crumbling to the ground since the expulsion from Spain of the monastic orders; and it produces a singular sensation to wander through these desolate cloisters, and wonder at the curious moral process which induced the occupants to bury themselves alive, and to render themselves so obnoxious to the rest of the world by so doing, as to make their extermination a matter of state policy. The monks of Miraflores belonged to a silent order. Each had his little bed-room and sitting-room, into which his dinner was passed through a hole in the wall—with a little garden to himself shut in by walls; and here, excepting when he went to mass, he devoted himself to a life of seclusion, which he contrived to render as absolutely unprofitable to his fellow-creatures as it was possible for a man to do and live. After all, perhaps the monks that shut themselves up did not do so much

harm to society as those who went at large. The Government might have made an exception in their favour, as they have in favour of the nuns, who still occupy their convents, one of which, Las Huelgas, near Burgos, is worthy of a visit, if only because there is a certain novelty in these days in not being able to look at women—some of whom are the first ladies of the land—excepting through an iron grating, as if they were specimens in a menagerie. And so, indeed, from a philosophical

point of view, they are, belonging to a type destined before long to figure among the extinct species: for one scarcely believes that in another century, at the present rate of moral and intellectual progress, convents and bull-fights will continue to exist side by side in any Christian country in Europe; or that any nation will be found so cruel and superstitious as to derive their enjoyment from torturing bulls, and their hopes of salvation from torturing themselves.

ON A RESURRECTIONIST.

HERE lies an honest man, my brothers,
Who raised himself by raising others :
Anxious his friends from soil to save,
His converse still was with the grave :
To rescue from the tomb his mission,
He took men off to the physician ;
And strove that all, whom death releases,
Should rest—if not in peace—in pieces.
So here he waits his resurrection,
In hopes his life may bear dissection.

J. T.

A TRUE REFORMER.—PART IX.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—BEATING ABOUT THE BUSH.

THE luncheon which took place at the conclusion of the day's manœuvres having come to an end, the miscellaneous visitors dispersed, leaving the rest of us, who were Mr. Strickland's guests, at his shooting-box on the moor, to return homewards together. Just as we were starting off, Mr. Merrifield expressed a wish to explore the view from a neighbouring hill, which sloped up steeply from all sides, culminating in some gigantic granite boulders; and as I offered to show him a short cut homeward from that point, we turned off together towards it.

At the foot of the granite block we found a picket of cavalry, which took charge of our horses while we climbed to the summit. The point was certainly of sufficient strategic importance to justify its occupation, which prevented the enemy from stealing a march or manœuvring successfully for a surprise, for it commanded the view for many miles in every direction; and from the top we were not only able to see the whole of the force within whose lines we were, but we looked down also on the white tents of the hostile army a few miles further off, concealed by intervening ground from their opponent, but exposed to view from this commanding elevation. We thought also we could make out the faint sea-line to the north, and the high lands on the coast to the south. We remained there for some time, enjoying the beauty of the prospect.

"It has certainly been very interesting to watch these manœuvres from day to day," observed Mr. Merrifield, as we rode slowly homeward along the narrow moor-path. "And

perhaps the most striking thing about them is the complete contrast between what we see here, the straggling columns moving about the roads, and these long lines of wagons, and the pickets and detachments scattered about everywhere—in short, the apparent irregularity of everything—the contrast between this and the conventional notions of what constituted military training, at least in my young days, when military manœuvres began and ended with a few stiff movements on a level parade."

"The conventional way of looking at things permeates all professions, but none more than the military. Men knew of course that what they were doing was not real training, or at least they might have known if they had thought about it. It was want of imagination I suppose that failed them."

"Have you had any opportunity, Captain West, of ascertaining what these foreign officers think about the way in which we have acquitted ourselves?"

"They express themselves very handsomely; but then they could hardly be otherwise than polite to the hosts who have treated them so well. After all, these manœuvres don't bring out the best part of the British soldier. To see him at his best he ought to be seen fighting?"

"But as to looks?"

"I think the foreigners could hardly be expected to fall into raptures about our militia at any rate; those yokels, for example, who were discussing their sausages just now. But I doubt if our army is much to look at, comparatively speaking. We English are said not to know how

to dress, and the criticism certainly extends to our troops. And it always has been so. A very good soldier, speaking in his reminiscences of the great reviews of the Allied armies held at Paris after Waterloo, says that our troops were the most undersized, and the worst dressed, and generally the meanest-looking of the whole lot, and that the Allies were astonished at the insignificant appearance of the victors in the famous battle."

"Well, there is no doubt, I hope, about the fighting qualities. Our pardonable national vanity can hardly be deceiving us upon that point."

"It is curious to observe, by the way," I remarked, "how conventional the standard of courage is even now. We are told, for example, by military writers, that certain things are impossible in war, the point of impossibility being apparently reached when about one-fourth of a body of troops are *hors de combat*. When that number of an attacking force are knocked over, it is considered legitimate to retire, or if they are defending a position, it is not considered disgraceful to yield it. The position is conventionally said to be untenable. But clearly because twenty-five men out of a hundred are killed or wounded, that does not affect the competency of the remaining seventy-five to stop where they are. They are still safe in wind and limb."

"I suppose," answered my companion, "there must be some great expenditure of vital energy in such moments, when men see death and destruction going on around them in every form. For judging, as you say, by military histories, troops seem to become exhausted and incapable of further effort, even although they may have been doing nothing all day but standing still. Certainly the slaughter used to be much greater in the battles of ancient times."

"The slaughter took place for the most part in the pursuit, I suspect. The beaten party had no time to get away when the fighting was all hand to hand, as they have in these days of long bowls. But I should say the standard of courage is higher now."

"From what do you make that inference?"

"Well, to take one well-known case. It was not considered incompatible with the attributes of the bravest of the Trojans that he should run away when his heart failed him; but nowadays no one dare run away even from a man double his size. You have to take your chance if you come across a fellow of that sort; you are bound to stand for him if he comes at you."

"That must have been a difficulty with the knights of the middle ages also," said Mr. Merrifield. "All the weakly men could not have gone into monasteries, and apparently there was no picking and choosing in the single combats of those days."

"Skill must have had a good deal to do with success then, I suppose, as it has now. The best swordsmen in the army are not for the most part hulking louts, such as are depicted in novels of the muscular school, but dapper fellows, often rather under than over middle-size. But I suppose you cannot have had leisure to read rubbish of that sort?"

"I waste time like other folk, and in other places than the House of Commons. They are certainly an amusing illustration of what you say about the conventional way of looking at things, the authors not seeing apparently that physical strength gives one man no advantage over another out of the prize-ring. Duelling, at any rate with pistols, made one man as good as another, so far as muscles went."

"And a blackguard like Guy

Livingstone would assuredly have been shot sooner or later, as he deserved to be. In fact, if ruffians of that sort were really going about loose in the present day, it would be necessary to reinstitute duelling for putting them down."

My companion seemed to disapprove of this light way of speaking about duelling, for he changed the subject abruptly. "What you were saying about Hector and Achilles just now leads me to remark, that it is not so much probably the standard of courage as the way of manifesting it that alters with time. The ancients were less artificial in their habits than we moderns, and more impulsive."

"I think one gets a very good insight into some attributes of the ancient Greeks by observing their blood relations the Indians, who have many of their characteristics in an exaggerated form. If half-a-dozen Indians are quarrelling, and one of the lot, taking the initiative, lays about him with his cudgel, knocking all the others down, the latter will very probably stand it quietly, to use a bull, merely because he anticipates them in action. Yet these fellows are brave enough according to their lights, and make splendid soldiers under good discipline. Now our friends of this morning with the sausages would not stand being hit by anybody, even before they put on their red coats."

"True, and what you say is borne out very much by what people call the *Iliad* of the East—I mean the *Ramayana*. Are you acquainted with the book?"

"Only through translations. Being an Englishman, and having lived in India, of course I know nothing of Sanscrit."

"Well, I don't want to insult the shade of Homer by comparing the *Ramayana* to the *Iliad*, but you

certainly have exhibited there in a striking because exaggerated form, the peculiar weakness of the Greek intellect, so acute and so strong in some respects, so defective in others, because entirely wanting in the critical faculty with respect to the value of evidence. The Hindoo mythology is not intrinsically more absurd than the Grecian, although it may be recited in a more extravagant way. Yet the Greeks appear for the most part to have accepted their theology unquestioning, just as I am told the Hindoos do at the present day."

"Their religion is certainly a very lively and vivid belief with the Hindoos. That any evidence should be required in support of it, is an idea it never occurs to them to entertain. That a story should be recited from the *Ramayana* is quite sufficient evidence of its truth, no matter how wildly extravagant or absurd it may be."

But I must not stop to repeat the whole of this conversation; and however delightful it might be to ride across Arrowdown in conversation with Mr. Merrifield, listening to his disquisitions on the Aryan mythology, and borne on the flood of striking and beautiful ideas which he poured forth on the subject, I nevertheless grudged the time not given to the one thing I had most at heart, and from which we had now wandered away. Such an opportunity of unfolding my views to the person most able to give effect to them was not likely to occur again. The path we were traversing was just wide enough for the two horses to go abreast, but too stony and uneven for fast riding. For a *tête-à-tête* conversation, the situation was everything one could desire. No need to button-hole, and no fear of boring. Feeling the importance of the occasion

I became very anxious and impatient as the moments passed by, and we slowly mounted one crest after another of the rolling moor.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—COMING TO THE POINT.

At last Mr. Merrifield himself gave a sudden turn to the conversation.

"It is curious to notice," he observed, "the progress of development in military as in other human affairs. I don't mean, of course, as to improvement in firearms and so on, but in the mode of tactics. So far as I understand these matters, the only mode of manœuvring recognised in the time of Marlborough, and even that of Frederic the Great, was by long lines made up of the whole army, or at most of wings. The notion of divisions and brigades, and then that of army corps, seems to have been of later date. Yet apparently this organisation would have been just as suitable in the times of Frederic as it is now. But mankind seems incapable of arriving at new ideas on these or any matters of political organisation *per saltum*. They are developed only by slow degrees."

"And just now we seem to be on the point of developing a new mode of fighting, based, as I understand it, on individual intelligence compounded with a very strict discipline."

"The military discipline and training of the present day form, by the way, an excellent school for young men. I have been greatly struck with the thorough manner in which all regimental business is done in these camps. If I had a son instead of a daughter, I think I should certainly put him into the army for a season, before he settled down to some other profession."

It was gratifying to notice the favourable impression my companion had received on this head. I

pursued the conversation, however, without remark. "This last development to which you refer may be ascribed to the changes in firearms, I think, which forced us to modify our mode of tactics, and was not due to the same spirit of development which brought about most of our changes."

"No doubt you are right as to that particular case; but although we are quite clear as to the present tendency of changes in warfare, we have no clearer notion than our forefathers what the next changes will be. All we know is that the nation which first acts upon the new idea will have for the time the advantage over the rest of the world—sad it is to have to say so."

"My own belief is that there is a great idea available just now to be seized upon. We have improved our artillery and musketry till one might suppose it would soon be impossible to stand up against them, although it has to be remarked by the way that the proportion of killed and wounded in battle seems to be steadily diminishing instead of increasing, but the noticeable thing is that artillery and rifles both require daylight to be effective. Neither can do anything in a fog, still less in the dark. Here then you have a new idea for successful warfare."

"You mean by night attacks?"

"Precisely so. The troops that first learn to move by night will be able to laugh at the enemy's artillery and ten thousand men may throw a whole army into confusion."

"But is not all experience of war to the effect that enterprises by night are liable to fail from the most trifling causes? From what I have

understood of such matters, night attacks are such ticklish things that they hardly ever succeed."

"They have generally been improvised affairs, I fancy, adopted on the spur of the moment, and carried out in an imperfect, half-hearted way, the greater part of the troops engaged having probably no distinct information what the affair was all about. The sort of thing I have in view is very different from this. I am thinking of a systematic training, by which the troops would become as prompt and steady when moving in the dark as they are at present in daylight. I confess that I have no very distinct conception as yet of what the system should be—that must be left to be discovered by your process of development. No doubt it will require a very high order of discipline and intelligence, but I have enough national vanity to think that this is just the sort of work in which our national qualities would give us a superiority; the same coolness and self-possession which distinguish our sailors would then have full play on land."

"But the secret would not be long kept, and then all nations would, after the first surprise, be put on a par again, except so far as the qualities you speak of might give the advantage to one or the other. The final result would merely be that we should be landed in a new mode of warfare."

"But the first start is everything in war. It may give you the superiority in perhaps the only great campaign you have to undertake in a century. Besides, this process of imitation by one nation of the improvements hit upon by another is, after all, a very slow one sometimes. Look at what has happened in our own day. The Prussians organized an entirely new system almost unobserved; yet although all

the world knows how extraordinarily successful that system has proved, the French are only now beginning to talk about adopting it, and we are moving, if at all, in a contrary direction."

"Is that so? Surely this has been a time of inquiry and reform with us, and putting our military institutions on their defence as well as every other branch of the body politic? We seem to have been fully as busy as every other nation in that way."

"There has been plenty of fuss and plenty of change certainly, but mostly in the wrong direction, I think."

"You refer to the abolition of purchase, I suppose? Is it possible, Captain West, that you can be an advocate for maintaining that mischievous, that iniquitous practice?" And my companion spoke with a somewhat heightened tone of voice, as if he were about to lose his temper.

"Oh no, please don't misunderstand me on that point," I replied, eagerly; "that change was absolutely essential, as it was pronounced to be, for all other reforms that were to follow; I did not refer in the least to that."

"Then what is it that you find fault with? That measure was merely one link in a chain of remedial measures which we have been engaged upon for some years past."

"I think the case may be stated in this way. The history of the Prussian army has been one of continuous improvement from the Napoleonic wars down to Metz. How has the same time been spent by us? The period from Waterloo to the Crimean war was one of complete stagnation, or rather we were going backward. Wellington's army and system were the creation of his patient genius; the War Department had not helped in any way to form it, and by degrees that splendid machine became rusty, and the men

who knew how to work it had passed away. Since the Crimean days there has certainly been a season of energy, more or less spasmodic, and always frightfully costly; but the energy, so far as administration goes, has been in great measure misdirected, and the result is that we have built up a cumbrous machine which hardly works in peace, and would utterly collapse in war. The result is, I verily believe, that we are absolutely worse prepared at the present moment for a war, should we unhappily become engaged in one, which heaven forbid"—I threw in this remark about heaven as a sop to Mr. Merrifield, the allusion to war being evidently distasteful, as I inferred from a restless movement he made in his saddle—"than we were in the Crimean days. For then we had merely to create everything; and although we did not happen to light upon the man of genius needed, possibly we might have done so if the war had gone on longer. But now the first thing to be done would be, not to create but to destroy. If the British army is not to go to immortal smash when called on active service, the War Office would have to be pulled to pieces, and the whole system of military administration built up anew. That is a nice prospect! A flank movement in face of the enemy with a vengeance. There is one other alternative, certainly. If you had the good fortune to hit upon a really first-rate man for leader of an expedition, he would probably pitch the system overboard, and simply improvise his own way of feeding and moving the army; and then, instead of the War Office routine, with its checks and counter-checks, and its warrants, and circulars, and forms, and precedents, piled up in confusion one above the other till men can neither stand nor understand

them, he would perhaps devise a rough-and-ready system of control and audit of his own. In fact, he would do over again what Wellington did in the Peninsula—organize a war department for service in the field. But what a strain to put on a general engaged before the enemy, and in these days too of short campaigns! And what a satire on our present organisation, that it only just pulls along while there is no strain on it, and would have to be set aside on the first occasion of its being wanted for real use!"

"That would be an alarming picture, indeed, if a true one. But is not your view morbid or exaggerated? I have observed that you express yourself very strongly on this point, Captain West, but I thought that was merely due to the prejudice of a military man who looked at things from the mere soldier's point of view. I should have expected a more dispassionate estimate of things from you, now that you have had some experience of office, and of the possibilities of government."

"I felt very strongly on the subject, Mr. Merrifield, when first I had the honour of speaking to you about it, but I assure you I feel ten times more strongly now than I did then, and I have not been unobservant during my novitiate."

"Well, but I should like to hear your criticisms a little more in detail. Your denunciations, although hearty, have been somewhat vague so far. Cannot you give me an idea of some of the specific points of your objections?"

Here, then, was the very opportunity I had been longing for, and no words could express the tension of feeling I experienced in the desire to veil the anxiety struggling for expression under an outward calmness of manner. But just at this moment we were interrupted.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—OUR REFORMER MEETS WITH THE RIGHT LISTENER AT LAST.

In the interest of our conversation I had not noticed that we had reached the point where our bridle-path cut in at an acute angle with the main road, and that although the open moor rendered all objects visible for a long distance, the rest of the equestrian party were now close to us, having reached almost simultaneously the point of junction. There was no alternative but to fall in with the cavalcade.

In the first excitement of this disappointment I did not notice Eva's absence from the party. On inquiry it was explained that she and Tom Strickland had taken another route across the moor. Tom declared, said his sister, that only a woman could be cruel enough to ride over such stony roads, and wanted all of them to follow his guidance along a short cut not more than two miles round. But she protested that he would infallibly lead them into a bog, as he did not know the country a bit, and only my wife had the courage to accompany him. There they were, she added, over yonder, just disappearing over the crest of that rise on the right.

Mr. Merrifield entered at once into lively conversation with the young ladies, declaring that he felt so braced up by this upland air that the day seemed only beginning instead of ending. But to a man accustomed, as he was, to spend the long weary nights in arguing, defending, replying, convincing all around, an hour or so of conversation must have been a mere relaxation. I don't think, by the way, that Sybil half appreciated the honour done her in being thus talked to—an honour disguised perhaps by the thoroughly unaffected manner in which it was conferred—and would much have preferred Tom Strickland's company.

So foolish are young ladies. *Νήπια τέκνα !*

However, this interlude did not last long. Presently Mr. Merrifield reined back his horse till I, who was riding a little in the rear, came up with him, and said, "I think Captain Strickland showed very good judgment in keeping off this abominably stony track. Cannot we follow his example and find a way for ourselves across the moor?" and so saying he turned off the road, and we were soon taking an independent line of our own in the general direction of the shooting-box. It was clear, then, that I had not bored the great Minister, since he himself thus pointedly sought a renewal of the conversation; and, indeed, in a minute or two we had the army question on again at full swing, Mr. Merrifield inviting me to state my views at length.

"I could not make them very short, I fear, if I tried," was my reply; "however, if I don't fatigue you there will be time to explain what I mean between this and the farm. It seems to me, then, that there are three important principles involved in this army question which have been lost sight of, but which, if acted upon, would go far to solve it. First, what you want is to have an army. That sounds like a mere truism, but the little point seems to be overlooked nevertheless. We have got an army certainly, but it is altogether too small to do anything with in war. And we have no means of augmenting it, for I need not say that these army reserves are the merest pretences of a reserve. The fact is, we should have to trust in war time to the slow and clumsy device of recruiting, and the war would be over before we had begun to get on our armour."

"But we have a larger army now than we have ever had before, at any rate in peace time!"

"That may be so, and for peace time the number of men embodied is perhaps even larger than necessary, but the fact appears to remain that we have no force available of a strength that would enable us to act effectively. Allowing for recruits, and depots, and so forth, you might perhaps be able to place 50,000 effectives in the field, and you had very much better place none."

"Yet England has fought and won great battles with less than that number."

"Yes, but then the Continental armies were small also. Austerlitz was thought at the time to be a battle of the Titans, but neither side had a hundred thousand men in the field. Napoleon had a much smaller force at Jena. But other nations have expanded in their scale of making war, and we shall have to do the same. If we had to go to war for the defence of Belgium, for example—I am only taking this as an extreme illustration," I added, for at this point my companion made a gesture of impatience; "admitting for the sake of argument that the supposition is absurd, still it may be assumed that some case or other might conceivably arise, under a combination of possible if highly improbable eventualities" (I threw all this in to keep my companion quiet), "when we should have to intervene by arms, say, for instance, in defence of a colony; and then we should find that we were without the means of doing so, and the war would be over before we were ready to begin."

"If, by being ready, you mean that England would not have military establishments organised on the gigantic scale we find obtaining on the Continent, I admit that we should not be; but England would never even dream of undertaking

war in that fashion. Her army must always necessarily be small; she must act with allies, and turn her naval superiority to account."

"But is not, speaking with all deference, is not that view of the case a little vague? If one military proposition has been made more clear than another by recent events it seems to be this, that fleets have little power for offensive movement in Continental warfare, although their defensive power may have improved, and therefore that wars must be settled by forces on land."

"However that may be—and I must say I doubt if the conclusion be well founded, that is, if you draw it from what happened in the Franco-German war—still I hold that we must regard the idea of emulating the armies of the Continent as out of the question."

"I don't say that we could emulate Germany with her million of men, but the population of Great Britain is as large now as that of France was in the revolutionary war; we could therefore maintain as large an army as Napoleon did. The fighting power of a nation—excuse the savagery of the expression—depends on the number of able-bodied men it has."

"You speak as if it would ever be possible to enforce a conscription in England."

"No, I merely meant to say that the men are there if you choose to employ them. Of course you must offer terms sufficient to attract."

Mr. Merrifield was silent for a minute; whether considering my proposition, or because he thought it was not worth replying to, I could not tell. I therefore went on—

"Twenty years ago, I admit, the notion of raising a large volunteer army would have seemed chimerical, but we have now actual evidence of what can be done in that way. Look at what happened in

America. If ever there was a country of which the impossibility of raising a big army might have been affirmed, it was that. All the difficulties we should encounter in such a task were existent there in a highly-intensified degree. The value of labour is even greater there than with us; the sense of independence also, and the novelty of the task. Yet, notwithstanding, the armies they succeeded in raising transcended in numbers even the armies of the Continent."

"Yes, but consider the cause they were fighting for. That was a struggle for a grand national principle, which set the heart of the whole people a-beating—not a mere political quarrel."

"No doubt you must have a sufficient cause. There must be something to arouse the passions of the nation, in order that the passions of the nation may be aroused. But I should hope England would never be drawn into war except on some grave and solemn cause."

"There at least I agree with you," said Mr. Merrifield with emphasis. "But you have overlooked the enormous, the profligate waste of money those efforts involved, and the tremendous incubus of debt they have laid on the American people."

"The effort was so costly because they were so ill prepared for it; because everything had to be improvised—army, system, officers, arms, everything. If the Northern States had had such a nucleus to begin with as even our moderate establishments, the expense, and every other great feature which gave the struggle its exceptional character, the blunders, the struggle, the time it took, would all have been diminished in proportion. And so with us; the sacrifice and the waste of a great war would be avoided just in proportion as we organised beforehand the means of undertaking it vigorously, instead

of allowing ourselves to drift into a quarrel, and then embarking on war, in half-hearted insufficient fashion, until the nation, exasperated by disaster, compels its leaders to obey the national voice, and undertake measures adequate to the occasion. But let me explain: I don't anticipate that England would ever be called on for such an effort as the Americans had to put forth, although with our scattered empire it would be difficult to measure the extent of our liabilities. 800,000 or even 200,000 British troops, with the means of filling up casualties, and maintaining the numbers, would suffice to turn the scale in any European war. What I object to is the notion that it would be useful, or even possible, to go into the thing with forty or fifty thousand—just enough to meet with certain disaster."

"Armies, such as you speak of, may be needed for Continental nations; but the same insular position which makes us, in my opinion, invulnerable, seems equally to render it impossible to attack other nations. It is not merely a case of marching across a frontier: we have to cross the sea; and how are we to do that with a force such as you speak of?"

"I should say the sea, to the nation which has the command of it, would give even less trouble than the land. It is quite as easy to put a regiment on board a steamer as to pack them in a train. Goods of all kinds are certainly carried more easily by sea than land. If America were separated from us by three thousand miles of land instead of by the Atlantic, it would be a *terra incognita* up to the present day. Seas bring countries together instead of keeping them apart. With the command of the Channel and our resources in ships, we could organise a transport-service far su-

perior to any railway system, such as would practically annihilate the distance between us and the seat of war. Then look at the enormous advantage the sea gives, if you have to shift the theatre of operations. Suppose the case, for example, of a war transferred from the north of Germany to Belgium. Instead of moving your supplies after you over hundreds of miles of railway, you land them at the nearest point. In the Peninsular war, as soon as Wellington had advanced to the Pyrenees, he shifted his base from Portugal to the Bay of Biscay, so that instead of having to drag his supplies over the whole length of Spain and its weary mountains, he was able to keep his army in clover without an effort. The French, under similar circumstances, would probably have been starving, because they had only land carriage."

"Yes, but it strikes me that we have only to look at the expenditure in the Crimean war, where we had what you would no doubt call a mere handful of men, to form some notion of the cost of attempting to send out expeditions on the gigantic scale you contemplate. Besides, it is impossible to leave out of sight the fact that these enormous armies are to be made up of volunteer soldiers. No; without enforced service, and that would be opposed to the whole spirit of the national sentiment, large armaments seem impracticable. We must be prepared to act with small numbers, and trust to efficiency for giving them increased value."

"The sort of scheme which I have in view would not, I believe, be really much more costly than our present one, while it ought to give us a sufficient force, although maintaining the voluntary system. Let me observe, by the way, that it is fairly open to question whether volunteer soldiers are really so much, if at all,

more expensive than conscripts. In the first place they are likely to be much better troops, I suspect, man for man; for although we hear so much about the spirit and intelligence of the German soldiery, it is only reasonable to suppose that there must be a lot of men among them who hate the business, and would be glad to shirk it in any possible way. But the real cost of an army appears not to be so much what is paid for wages, as the loss in national wealth caused by the withdrawal of that amount of labour from productive to non-productive pursuits. The State pays more, no doubt, but not the nation, as it appears to me, except so far as the rate of wages may be higher in one country than the other. Indeed it might be maintained with some reason that the voluntary plan is the cheaper of the two, for the waste in national wealth of keeping up large armies in peace time must in the long-run be prodigious, whereas we only engage our extra hands when we want them. Where our system fails is that we have no adequate provision for getting these extra hands at the critical moment."

"Yes, but your argument assumes that such a provision is practicable."

"That is just what I was coming to. This is the first of the three points of army reform which I think should be aimed at, and which I am so glad to have the opportunity of submitting for your consideration. I believe it is quite possible to get the men if you only set the right way to work. The people of England are warlike enough, but they don't like pottering about, playing at soldiers in peace time; still more they don't like being paid less than the market-rate of wages. But about the military spirit of the country there can surely be no doubt. What other nation could have produced our volunteers? Then see how popular

our militia is. You can get any number of men you please for it. And why? Because the men are kept near their own homes, and because they are not embodied during the busy part of the year. And yet this force, so elastic in numbers, and through which you can really get at the youth of the nation, we deliberately throw away for the very purpose it is required, namely, the purpose of war."

"How so? The militia is the main defence of the country."

"A defence in the improbable event of invasion certainly, but if we want to get men for any effort abroad they are lost to us. Now it seems to me that it would not be difficult to provide for getting all the good out of the militia that we now have—its power of indefinite expansion, its popularity, and so forth—without any of the drawbacks now attaching to it, by a simple amalgamation of that force with the regular army. Men don't like serving far away from home, and they don't like serving continuously throughout the year. Well, provided we have a sufficiency of soldiers for ordinary garrison duty and colonial service, why should the army be always under arms in peace time? What you really need is to know where to put your hand on plenty of men when you want them, and that they should have had a certain amount of preparation and drill, and that all the organisation required for handling the force when it is wanted should be framed and ready. I would say, then, have a real amalgamation between the militia and the line. Carry out the principle of localisation thoroughly, and then you may render the military position of the country really effective, without making it a bit more expensive."

"Is this not in effect what is done already by means of the militia reserve? Are not part of

the militia under an obligation to join the regular army if required to do so?"

"We have a militia reserve, certainly, but altogether too small in quantity. With our small army it is less even than a mere half-measure to provide only thirty thousand men for its reserve. The reserves ought to be much larger than the embodied army. In fact, the whole militia ought to be available as a reserve. And, be it remembered that, just in proportion as you increase your effective reserves, will you be able to reduce the force permanently under arms in peace time."

"Does not the plan of short service lately introduced give you also a large reserve, in addition, from the regular army? At any rate will it not do so eventually, when the plan has come into full operation?"

"The system assumes that a man shall pass six years in the ranks, and six in the reserve. But deducting men who are allowed to complete their full service with the colours, as will no doubt be largely done, and for casualties, these reserves will never at all approach the embodied army in strength. But the question seems to me to be, why tie your hands with restrictions of this sort? By what is really a very slight change of organisation, we might in effect mobilise the whole militia, and render them available for all the military purposes of the country. I doubt if the liability to serve abroad on emergency will at all interfere with the supply of men. On the contrary, it seems reasonable to expect that this liability, if enforced in war time only, would increase the popularity of the force rather than otherwise, especially if a fair retaining fee be offered."

"You speak of this merging of the militia into the line as a slight measure. You would not find that it would be thought so generally."

"I daresay there would be plenty of men ready to oppose it. Brammy"—Brammy was a diminutive applied to Mr. Braham, affectionately by his friends and followers, jestingly by the rest of the world—"we may be sure, would come out with solemn platitudes about the danger of tampering with our great constitutional force; but we could not wish him a less promising bugbear to handle. People will surely be wise enough to see that political danger nowadays is not to be apprehended from the court or from the army. We have entered on a new state of things, when the danger is not that courts and governments will be too strong, but rather that they will not be strong enough. Besides—I speak with great deference, as becomes a young politician addressing the head of the profession—but, looking at the history of recent times, is it not the case that great measures are just those which are most easy to carry? Take your own case, Mr. Merrifield, if I may venture to refer to it. When you were pressing forward your great measures for abolishing entail and reforming the Scotch Presbytery, what a commanding majority you always had at your back! But now when we show hesitation, especially when Baliol (Mr. Baliol was one of the Secretaries of State in the Ministry of that day) brings out and withdraws his pottering half-measures, we never seem to be sure of a majority from one day to another."

I suppose Mr. Merrifield must have been struck by what I said, for he remained silent when I stopped, a very unusual thing for him to do. Indeed I was quite shocked afterwards, when recalling our conversation, to think how I had been monopolising the larger share of it. However, just now I was emboldened to go on.

"In short, my idea is that we

ought to reverse our system. The line and the militia should be amalgamated thoroughly together; and moreover, instead of making the militia the reserve for the line, we ought to make the line the reserve for the militia. This is a reform, as I conceive, very urgently needed. In training for any profession, a bad preparation is often worse than no preparation at all. This is certainly the case in the military profession. The drill and training of the sort which a recruit gets in the militia often do him harm rather than good; at any rate this certainly holds good for the officers. The notion Mr. Thorowcome set agoing was that service in the militia should be made a qualification for appointment to the line; it is really in no sense a qualification, but rather a disqualification. The only use of the rule is that it acts as a bribe to induce men to take the militia commissions that were going a-begging. But where the men are imperfectly trained and disciplined, there is the need all the greater for experienced officers. The militia, then, I say, should be officered entirely from the line. As it is now organised, it would simply go to pieces on the first strain. But if your commissioned and non-commissioned officers were all soldiers of experience—men who had been trained in the best possible school, the British line—then, in their hands, a raw material would soon be got into shape. This is no doubt one of the secrets of Prussian success. The troops are young, but the officers are ripe soldiers. So it should be with our militia. By giving it a backbone of the veteran element of the right sort, of the men who have to command, you would increase its efficiency to an amazing extent.

"There would be another advantage in such a system," I went on to add; "it would furnish an outlet

for the line officers, and thus provide for a very serious difficulty. I do not want to defend the purchase system, and it has disappeared never to return; but at any rate purchase gave a very cheap and efficient form of retirement, and how you are to supply its place in this respect no one has yet proposed or thought about proposing. Yet the question will have to be faced some day, and a very tough one it will be found. Now, by making the line a stepping-stone to the militia you would at once have an outlet for a large number of officers. And, observe, you injure no one by so doing, and interfere with no vested rights, for it cannot be said that the rising generation of schoolboys have any vested rights to obtain militia commissions. A commission in the militia is not a livelihood."

"You speak of the difficulty of maintaining a proper flow of promotion, but is it so certain that any such difficulty will arise? Thorowcome, whenever I talked with him about it, before, poor fellow, his health broke down, used to appear very confident that this part of the new scheme would work smoothly enough. I understood him to say that promotion to major would be reached after about eighteen years' service on the average. That rate would give us field-officers in the prime of life."

"Yes, I remember reading statements to that effect before I went into Parliament; but how Mr. Thorowcome proposed to accomplish it I suspect he had not the slightest idea, unless it was by enforcing retirements with pensions, on a gigantic scale of expense. Of course the difficulty will not occur just yet. So long as the sale of commissions by the State goes on, promotion will continue merrily enough; it is the power of realising a capital sum which creates the inducements to

retire. But when the present race of officers, who entered under the former system, disappears, and their successors come upon the scene, then the stagnation will arise, and a very great and serious difficulty it will be found."

"But your own regiment has always been a non-purchase one, I understand, yet the difficulty does not seem to have arisen in your case. I have made the acquaintance of several field-officers of artillery during these manœuvres, and they seem to be all very active and efficient men, quite in the prime of life."

"Our promotion has been due mainly to continual augmentations. Five-and-twenty years ago the regiment was comparatively but a small one; then it began to be increased, and the increase has been going on ever since. It was increased before the Crimean war, and of course during that war. Then it was increased for the Indian mutiny, an increase of at least doubtful necessity, by the way, as regards the officers, for the officers of the Indian artillery were much in excess of the wants of the service, and a large number of them had no batteries with which to serve. However, the increase was made. Then, in 1870, when the panic arose, there was another considerable augmentation,—this, by the way, being almost simultaneous with another reduction of the Indian branch of the artillery, so that officers were being pensioned off on one side and promoted on the other: happily Pondragon and other army reformers did not find it out or there would have been a row. Then, lastly, a lot of officers were appointed to the auxiliary forces—militia and volunteer artillery—and their places filled up. This, I may remark, is a very good illustration how the officering of the militia may be made to stimulate

promotion. But thus you will see that the present state of promotion in the artillery is purely artificial. Most of the junior officers now in the regiment have been brought in by augmentations and not in succession to vacancies. It is just the same with the Engineers. The physical efficiency of the Prussian and Italian officers is due to the same cause. Comparatively small armies have been rapidly expanded into large ones. But an end of this augmenting process comes at last. We have certainly reached it, I should say, in my regiment; we have made every one supernumerary to the fixed establishment who could by straining the construction of the term be deemed to be doing other than regimental duty, and how further relief is to be obtained I am sure I don't know. Already the cry is raised that the subalterns are too old. The same thing, I apprehend, must infallibly happen with the whole of the army by-and-by, and even in a greater degree, because we have an advantage over the infantry in our much greater proportion of field-officers. We have about twice as many colonels and lieutenant-colonels as there is any work for, and they are simply in each other's way; yet, if any reformer were to propose to reduce them, he would be met by the insuperable objection that to do so would make the present bad promotion still worse. Our establishment of senior officers seems in fact to be kept up on its present scale mainly in order to make an outlet for the juniors."

"But is it not the case that what are called the ordnance corps are officered for the most part by men who make a permanent profession of the army, and will not this account for their exceptionally slow promotion?"

"That is no doubt the case, but then the tendency of recent adminis-

tration seems to be towards assimilating the state of things in the rest of the army with what obtains in our regiments. Pendragon, and his father, and the rest of the army reformers, are all calling out for professional soldiers, as if the aim and object of all reform should be to produce that class. But, after all, the state of promotion in the artillery and Engineers has been so largely modified by augmentations, as I have endeavoured to explain, that its present state is no index of the normal result of promotion in a professional body which makes the army its permanent occupation. To appreciate properly the tendency of such a state of things you must look at what the regiment was before the augmentations began, when we had captains of fifty-five, or at the state of the Indian army before the mutinies, when it was common to meet with lieutenants of twenty years' service, and three-fourths of the field-officers were past work."

"But here again are you not speaking of a class which looked on the army as their only means of livelihood? Whereas the British army will always be a favourite resort with young men of means, who enter the service as a diversion, to be dropped with the expiration of their youth?"

"That is true. There will always be a large non-professional element in the army, to whom the amount of purchase-money is not a primary object, and who, therefore, will be as ready to retire without that inducement as with it, whenever it suits their convenience. The old Indian army was, no doubt, more purely professional than the British army is ever likely to become, all the officers in it looking to their pay as their only livelihood. But, on the other hand, they were serving in a bad climate, with an exceptionally high rate of casualties;

and, moreover, what is very important to remember, in the Indian army there was a system of purchase in force which unquestionably stimulated retirements greatly, and since that has been abolished, there has been a complete stagnation. All this, I think, points to the need for providing an outlet for our line officers, and such you would have by officering the militia—or whatever body takes its place—from the line."

"I apprehend the pay of these officers would be a considerable charge."

"They would have to be paid something, no doubt; but, on the other hand, you would save the present half-pay list, and the present outlay for militia officers, and you would have one charge in lieu, representing, in fact, a system of terminable annuities, for it would not be well that officers should remain an indefinite time with the militia. But this, after all, is only a secondary feature in the scheme. The main point is the complete fusion of the militia with the line, so that it would become a real reserve, available in need for service either at home or abroad."

"Such a scheme would evidently be very costly, to say nothing of other objections which at first sight may not be apparent."

"Each reserve soldier would require a retaining fee, no doubt. But, after all, it is not the pay of the troops which forms the most formidable item of the estimates. Clothing, food, hospitals, staff, stores, buildings, pension-lists, non-effective services, unemployed officers; these are the things that mount up. Supposing, for example, that we had 200,000 men in the militia, all available as a reserve, at sixpence a-day while unemployed, the charge would be under two millions a-year, not a very high price to pay for the

additional strength it would give us. With such a reserve of trained soldiers, with all the conditions for prompt embodiment already prepared; above all, with the reserves officered by thoroughly-trained and experienced men; with a homogeneous force of this description it should certainly be possible to dispense with a part of the regular army now embodied. I believe, then, that the plan would be economical as well as efficient, but the efficiency of it is the point I lay most stress on."

"This, then," said Mr. Merrifield, "if I understand you aright, is the first of your three proposals. Now, then, for the second." And so far from being bored with the subject, as I had feared might be the case, he appeared to take quite a lively interest in it, and to be almost eager to pursue it further. I should explain, indeed, that this report of the conversation entirely misrepresents it, so far as it makes me appear to have been the principal speaker and my companion the listener. What really happened was, in fact, quite the reverse; but although a gratified and, I hope, benefited listener, I have in truth reported in full only my own share, omitting all the copious illustration and ingenious disquisition which illumined his discourse. Thus the report, although given as if *verbatim*, is in fact merely an abstract of what passed, as will be plain when it is remembered that we had been riding for six or seven miles at a foot pace.

But to resume. "Now," said Mr. Merrifield, "for the second point of your scheme."

"Well, my second point is comparatively a minor one, and yet by no means unimportant, for it is at the bottom of a good deal of possible reform."

But what is that rushing past us in the twilight? A horse—a rider—

less horse—Eva's horse it must be, loose, snorting with excitement, at which goes suddenly by, the reins full gallop across the moor.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—THE CONVERSATION INTERRUPTED.

I spurred back in the direction indicated by this apparition, but could not for some time find what I was in search of. There might have been no accident; loose horses were no uncommon phenomena during the manoeuvres; but it was more likely there had been an accident, and the few minutes passed in hurrying back across the moor were passed in an agony of suspense which those may appreciate who have ever been in the like situation.

The surface of the moor, although apparently flat, was in reality made up of undulations, and intersected by numerous little gullies, so that although the prospect from the ridges was a wide one, all the lower ground was hid from view; and as in my backward ride ridge after ridge was reached, I strained my eyes in vain through the dim evening light to discover any signs of human beings.

At last, when two or three miles had been traversed, which seemed like a dozen as I sped hither and thither in every direction, I descried a dark object in the distance, which as I pressed on towards it developed into the object of my search, a dismounted rider holding his horse and bending over a form, my wife, my poor Eva, lying senseless on the ground.

Tom Strickland, for of course it was he, was so absorbed in watching the pale face of his companion that he did not notice my coming till I rode up close. "Thank God you have come!" he cried; "I could not leave her like this, could not tell what to do;" and then explained hurriedly how the accident had happened. They had lost their

way in a detour to avoid one of the swamps in which the moor abounded, and were going at a foot pace, for the ground was very rotten, when Eva's horse put his foot into a hole and fell with her. The horse was up and off before Strickland could stop it, but he thought it had rolled partly on its rider, who had lain senseless ever since.

Tom Strickland now set off in search of assistance, while Mr. Merrifield, who like myself had been scouring the moor in search of the missing rider, and had now joined us, set off to intercept the provision cart which he had noticed to be making its way homeward in rear of the party, while I remained by my poor sufferer, watching with agony her pallid face and silent breathing, chafing her pretty hands, calling her by name, fearing the worst.

This agony of suspense was happily not long endured. Revived by the contents of a wine-flask I carried, and which I poured down her throat, Eva suddenly became sensible; could soon sit up, and presently declared herself quite sufficiently recovered to be lifted on to my horse, which I then led up to the pathway, meeting the returning cart just as the advance of evening made it difficult to discern any object in the landscape. By means of the friendly cart the shelter of the farm was soon reached, where we came upon a scene of anxiety and excitement, now happily allayed, as the sufferer turned out to be so much better than the first tidings had represented. A servant had already been despatched across the moor to bring out

the Stricklands' family doctor from Stampton; while Tom Strickland, bethinking him that a detachment of troops was encamped at an outpost not many miles off, had gone thither in quest of a surgeon, whom he brought back about midnight. By this time Eva was sound asleep, and Mrs. Strickland pronounced strongly against her being disturbed, a verdict which the young assistant surgeon, who had probably never been called in to attend a lady before, and was wholly inexperienced in the treatment of nerves, evidently considered as a reprieve, accepting in lieu of a consultation a supper and shake-down in the loft prepared for his reception.

Next morning early arrived the doctor from Stampton, a hale old gentleman who called everybody Sir or Ma'am, as the case might be, and whose ruddy face spoke of a life passed in healthy rides over the breezy downs. This worthy pronounced that no bones were broken, which was indeed already sufficiently obvious, but that the patient had experienced a severe shaking, which also Eva said she knew without being told; finally, he prescribed rest and quiet for a time, and returned homewards, promising to send back a mixture to be taken three times a-day.

Although the accident thus happily proved so much less alarming than it appeared at first sight, it put an end to our share in the manoeuvres. Eva expressed a great longing to return, declaring she should be dreadfully in everybody's way, and indeed our present residence was ill suited for an invalid of any sort, even although deriving the support of Mr. Dewleppe's mixture. Mrs. Strickland wanted to return with her to Stampton Court, leaving me to watch the manoeuvres, but of course we would not hear of that. A more convenient plan seemed to be to

anticipate our promised visit to Mr. Drew and his daughter by a few days—a liberty we might easily venture to take with such old friends, while at Thorpe we should be able to get the benefit of Fergusson's medical attendance for Eva. And accordingly we started off that afternoon in Mrs. Strickland's pony-carriage for Thorpe, which was only four miles beyond Stampton, leaving Sybil behind, and arrived there just at dusk to find Mary working in the garden, and the Squire drinking meditatively a pint of claret in the solitude of his dining-room.

From both we received the kindest welcome. Mary at once took possession of Eva, who was thoroughly knocked up with the drive, carrying her off to her room, and waiting on her for the rest of the evening with a watchful assiduity which seemed like a reproach to my own less careful efforts. This nursing, I may add, was of such persistent kind, and the friends found so much to say to each other, that it involved my sitting up till any hour of the night or morning, before the other young lady could be prevailed on to retire from Eva's room, her only reply to my remonstrance being that she was sure I liked these late hours, as they gave opportunity for an additional cigar.

Fergusson came next day to visit Eva. He pronounced that there was apparently no specific injury from the fall, but that it seemed to have caused a certain amount of shock to the system, for which rest would be the best cure. "Mrs. West should keep perfectly quiet for a time. She certainly appears altogether more delicate than she used to be, although it is perhaps difficult just now to form a correct judgment on the point. I should be inclined to suspect that the strain of London life is rather too much for her. I suppose there is a great deal going

on in the way of balls, and late hours, and so forth?"

"Yes, there is, a good deal, and my wife often complains of fatigue, and she certainly gets rather wearied at times. But she enjoys gaiety of this sort so much, that I have not the heart to curtail it, especially as I am a good deal occupied myself, and the life would be dull for her, and her sister too, if they did not go out."

"Well," said Fergusson, "you must make the most of the recess. The holiday on the moor ought to have acted like a tonic but for this accident. Perhaps, taking rest now, she may yet find the benefit of the trip. But you must take care of her, Captain West. I suppose you official men have society engagements which you cannot very well help, but depend on it these late hours and heated rooms are very bad things for delicate young ladies. Mrs. West gives me the impression of having done more in that way than is good for her."

So saying the worthy doctor took his departure, leaving me musing over his caution, resolving in my mind more or less vague projects for a more sober scheme of life. If we are always to be Londoners, sooner or later Eva should withdraw from the fatiguing life of the sort led last season. But then Sybil's company was an excuse for this year's racket; it was only fair to give her the full benefit of the London season before she went off to be buried in India.

Upon Sybil's future, indeed, I had just now a consultation with my little wife, as she lay on the drawing-room sofa which had been wheeled up towards the window, looking frail and slighter than ever in her pretty morning robe, a tiny slipper peeping out below the shawl which covered her feet.

"The time is drawing near for Sybil's departure, Eva. Barely two months remain."

"Yes, indeed; how the days do fly! It will be horrible to part with her, won't it? I don't know what I shall do without her."

"I am afraid you will find it lonely, my dear; almost as bad as it was before Sybil came up to join us in town."

"No; you know I didn't mean that, Charlie. Why do you say such cutting things? But, of course, it is only natural that Sybil and I should be fond of each other, living together as we have done almost all our lives."

And Eva looked almost ready to cry.

I recollected at the moment how cheerfully my little wife had quitted her mother's home to share mine—the shedding of tears, that eventful morning when we started from Sir-moori on our journey homewards, having been mainly on Mrs. Barton's part; and I confess to a pang of remorse and regret, mingled with unworthy jealousy at thinking that to be my companion no longer satisfied my wife's aspirations. Yet how should it be otherwise?

"Do you think," I said at last, "that your mamma would allow Sybil to stay another year with us before going out to India?"

"Oh!" said Eva, clapping her slender hands together, and almost springing up from the couch, "that would be delightful! Fancy having Sybil with us for a whole year more! But," she added with a sigh, "I am sure mamma would never agree to it."

It was curious to notice how we both tacitly assumed that Mrs. Barton would be sole referee in the matter, and that "Joe" would count for nothing.

"I don't see why your mamma should not consent. Sybil is full young to go out. If she stayed for another year she would still arrive in India before she was nineteen. Besides, it would really be a pity to

stop her music and singing lessons just as she is making such progress. And your mamma need not be at any expense in the matter."

Eva thought that if I put it in that way her mamma might very possibly agree. But would I write instead of her? I should do it so much more clearly.

"There is one thing I ought to say, however. Suppose Sybil's staying ends in her never going out at all?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that supposing Sybil finds a home of her own in England, her mamma might lose her altogether. That would be rather hard on your mamma, although it might be a very satisfactory arrangement for Sybil, and certainly a very pleasant one for us."

"But who are you thinking of?"

"Tom Strickland, of course."

"Captain Strickland?" cried Eva, colouring with surprise.

"Who else could I mean? Why, you must have seen how fascinated he is with your sister. I thought women were so much more observant than men about these things; but even I could not help noticing long ago that he was paying her particular attention."

"I think you are wrong there, Charlie," replied Eva, after a pause.

"I don't think I am," I answered, with an air of superior wisdom. "A man about town, like Strickland, who professes to be used up, and bored with everything, would never come dangling about as he does now, like a tame dog, riding with his sisters day after day, and hanging about the house whenever Sybil is there, if he were not under certain influences. Mrs. Strickland is quite delighted to have him so much at home. Whether she would be delighted at such a match for her son is another matter. I suspect she is a very proud woman at heart,

with all her gentle manner; but she would be very glad to see him settled, no doubt; and certainly she would have to look far to find a sweeter girl for daughter-in-law, or a prettier either. I only know one."

"You are an old flatterer, Charlie. But although I know you are so much cleverer than I am, I am not sure you are not wrong about this. I am sure Syb hasn't a notion about it. I don't think Captain Strickland dances with her particularly, more than he does with me, or anybody else."

"Strickland doesn't go about spooning like a boy fresh from school. Somebody didn't dance with you when he was making love. I suppose he is as old as I am. Certainly he must be thirty at least, for he has been over ten years in the service. We old fellows make love in sober fashion, proper to our age. Dull work for the lady in that case—isn't it, Eva?"

Thereon ensued a little flirtation which need not be set down here; for when the jars of household life did not obtrude, wearing away the romance of young marriage with their prosy vexations, we could still play at being lovers.

The result of our conversation was that I went away to write the proposal to my mother-in-law for Sybil's detention. It was the first letter I had written her since our arrival in England, for the family correspondence had been deputed to Eva, and I felt that the proposal I had to make was an ungracious one, since, disguise it as I might, the purport of it was in fact that, having carried off one daughter from her mother, probably never to see her again, I now wanted to detain the other, to relieve the loneliness which the first had to encounter in her married life. I felt, too, that I was to a certain extent writing under false pretences, since, after Eva's

opinion, it would plainly have been premature to communicate any expectations of the possible future in store for her sister.

There would be just time for a reply to this letter to arrive before

the date fixed for Sybil's departure for India, but I begged that Mrs. Barton would telegraph her decision, which would give us nearly a month's time for preparation, if it should be unfavourable.

CHAPTER XL.—IN WHICH OUR REFORMER FINDS ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY.

A letter received from Mrs. Barton with the Indian mail the very next day augured badly for the success of our proposal. It was addressed to me, and was the first I had ever received from her. She wrote direct to me, she said, to know what had become of us. It seemed to be months since she had heard of her darling child, and she feared there must be something the matter, for her last letter spoke of her feeling ill, and her continued silence made the writer so terribly anxious as to be quite unfit for any exertion, and unable to take any interest in what was going on around her. The letter was, in fact, one string of lamentations, extending over eight pages of very fine writing, and leaving room for news only merely in the crossing. They were up at Sirmoori for the season, and occupying Rhododendron Lodge as usual. Joe (my father-in-law), had quite taken to the hills, and had come up for six months too, he found exercise in the hills so good for his health, and the light of a covered racket-court so beneficial for his eyes; but it was a terrible sacrifice, for he was on half allowance all the time, and she really did not know how they should manage to get along and make two ends meet. She hoped dear Sybil would be very economical in her outfit, and get nothing that was not absolutely necessary. They were going to give a ball to the whole Station the night after next, and the house was at sixes and sevens, which must be her excuse for this short

note. Abbott (husband of Mary her eldest daughter, the Chief Court judge at Mahrattapoor) had been passed over for the chief commissionership, a shameful job, and was thinking of throwing up the service. Garrett's (the railway engineer, husband of Emma the second daughter) engagement with the Great Hindoostan Railway was up, and unless he could get into the Government public works he would have to go home. "Six children," said my correspondent, for one had been born since our departure, "and the eldest only five, and not a pice saved." Finch (husband of Harriet the third daughter) had lost five thousand [rupees understood] in tea, and was closer than ever. "Stops darling Fanny's chance of coming up to the hills this season." Captain Morris (native infantry, husband of Sophy the fourth daughter) had been obliged to clear off his debts by borrowing five thousand [rupees again understood] from the banks, Garrett going security together with Joe, as all the other brothers-in-law had declined to join. Martin (magistrate of Toghluhabad, husband to Fanny the fifth daughter) had been removed from his district for striking a messenger in open court, and made an opium agent instead. "Gives him five hundred a month more pay, but no prospects; he is very downhearted about it, poor fellow, but then Martin is such an ambitious man." Mrs. Barton, by the way, always called her sons-in-law by their surnames, and I have no doubt

spoke of me as West, as if I were a mere point in the family compass. This completed the batch of news, except that an incoherent announcement was added to the effect that Emma was expecting next month, and Sophy in November—the sentence being left unfinished.

Eva was of course very contrite over her mamma's letter, and its implied reproaches for neglecting to write, but pleaded good intentions; she had put off the task from day to day, till she had no idea how much time had passed away. And she looked so penitent and withal so frail as she lay on the sofa, that I had not the heart to scold.

Three days after our arrival at Squire Drew's, who should ride up to the door but Tom Strickland with Sybil. This appeared a sure confirmation of my suspicions, although they were merely the advanced-guard of an equestrian party, comprising besides themselves Mr. and Miss Merrifield and Miss Strickland, all of whom entered the drawing-room before Eva could effect her escape from it. The Minister and his family had returned to Stampton Court on their way northward, and he had thus kindly employed his only leisure day to ride over and inquire after Eva's health, and have a look at the country. The Squire unfortunately was out, going about his fields, and thus lost the opportunity of receiving his distinguished guest; but Mary did the honours of the house with her usual self-possession; and it was interesting to notice the unaffected and modest manner with which the young country girl exchanged greetings with her fashionable visitors; for although the Squire and Mr. Strickland were good neighbors, Mary had no personal acquaintance with the Strickland family, and of course Cabinet Ministers and their

belongings were quite beyond her experience.

"Yes," said Miss Strickland, "we came away from the moor sooner than was intended. The fact is (lowering her voice), mamma thought Mr. Merrifield was beginning to look bored, and between ourselves I think we were all losing our first zeal about the manœuvres; you see we had not your good example any longer. Your interest about them kept us all on good behaviour; but Tom, of course, did nothing but find fault with everything, and criticism like his has a wonderfully cooling effect."

"Yes," observed Miss Merrifield, "Captain Strickland's highest praise was to say that the generals were all a parcel of duffers. That was the elegant phrase he employed."

"No, no, you do me a great injustice," exclaimed Strickland; "I only ventured on a discriminating but benevolent criticism. I thought the manœuvring admirable. The pickets, speaking generally, faced towards the enemy quite as often as towards their own side, and I don't think the brigadiers on most days lost sight of more than half their brigades. And what could have been better than the skirmishing of the militia? There is an intelligent appreciation by both officers and men of our constitutional force of the spirit of modern tactics which is truly gratifying to witness. Then the Control Department got the men's dinners up very nearly every day without any break-down; and if you consider that they had nearly twenty thousand men to feed, and were often ten miles from their base of operations, its capacity to stand the strain of a real campaign is sufficiently proved. All this, I would have you to know, Miss Merrifield, is no mean praise, albeit offered by a humble captain of foot."

Here Eva observed that she knew Captain Strickland did not mean

what he said; but my attention was diverted by a question from Mr. Merrifield, who up to this point had been talking to Mary Drew, and now turning to me observed that he understood the Thorpe woods were well worth seeing; would I show him the way to the nearest view? And accordingly in a few minutes we were standing together on the little promontory by the summer-house, overlooking the river and commanding the range of woods up and down, the scene of our little picnic of the previous summer, the spot where the Squire and the Doctor discussed over

their cigars the coming disruption of all existing institutions, while I sat, half listening, half busied with the building of my castles-in-the-air, which then seemed so airy, albeit of such humble dimensions. Barely a year had passed, and now I stood there again, already in Parliament and part way up the official ladder, and, still more strange, having for my companion him whom the owner of the place denounced as the arch uprooter of all the foundations of the country, the very incarnation of the levelling policy of the age.

CHAPTER XLI.—IN WHICH ANOTHER POINT IS SCORED.

The interruption caused by Eva's accident, breaking off our conversation on the moor just when I was secure of the Minister's attention for a good hour longer, was unquestionably provoking; for what chance has anybody, much less a subordinate official, of getting an hour's *tête-à-tête* with the Premier during the season, or out of the season either, in ordinary course? But we accept the inevitable with resignation. Here, however, was another unlooked-for opportunity, and that Mr. Merrifield felt interested in the subject was evident from his almost immediately bringing the conversation round to it. I had sufficiently explained, he said, what was the first principle of army reform contended for. If he understood me aright, I advocated a complete amalgamation of the militia and the line? That, I explained, was my proposal. All recruits should be trained not only at one centre for each regiment, but as one homogeneous body. After a certain period of training, six months or so, the young soldier would elect for general or reserve service. In the former case he would join the active battalions

for twelve years, six of these being passed in the reserve; in the latter case he would be attached to the militia or reserve battalions of the regiment, and would be called out in peace time for only a few weeks in the year.

"But these reserve or militia men," I continued, "would not only be liable to embodiment at any moment (as they are at present), but also to serve abroad during the continuance of a war. In consideration of this condition they should be paid somewhat more than at present. In fact the pay should be raised up to the point that is found sufficient to secure a sufficient number of men."

"And if this should be found to involve an inordinate expense?"

"Why, then, I suppose it would be necessary to resort to the ballot. And if the measure were introduced by a strong Minister in a really strong way—in the same way, for example, as you carried your great Entail Bill—why, I believe the measure would be popular rather than otherwise, especially if the law were made indiscriminate and permitted no exemptions. I would

allow only one mode of exemption, and that is by service as a volunteer. This, by the way, would form perhaps the strongest reason for enforcing compulsory service by a ballot, because you can always procure troops to any extent required by voluntary enlistment by raising the pay sufficiently; but the ballot would give what is wanted so much at present, a means of control over the volunteers and of enforcing drill and discipline. At present, as it seems to me, the volunteers give everything and receive nothing, and therefore the complaint so often made about their slackness is surely unreasonable and unjust. The force exists merely by its own choice, and a very little—an unpopular War Minister, or an inconsiderate order—might suffice to disperse it. But if service as a volunteer exempted a man from the militia ballot, we ought to obtain a magnificent force of really efficient volunteers, whose organisation would be really under Government control, and then the very word invasion might drop out of the English language."

At this reference to invasion Mr. Merrifield made a gesture of impatience, so I hurried on. "It has often struck me that the Government and the volunteers are both at present in a false position in one most important respect. If the volunteers are to be called out, they are to be placed under martial law, and that of course would be necessary. But the law would only apply, I apprehend, to those who went out when summoned. Those who for any reason did not go out would remain in the category of private citizens, so that whether a man were obliged to take up arms in defence of his country would depend—not on whether he were a volunteer, but whether he happened to answer the summons to arms."

"But in such a crisis as you refer to, although I have hardly patience to discuss it seriously, a law would of course be passed enforcing the attendance of volunteers with their regiments for so long as the emergency continued."

"But that law would be made applicable only to those who had undertaken the duty of volunteers in the first instance, so that even then the result remains that the defence of the country is supported by voluntary contributions, a principle we do not recognise as valid for any other national obligation. We do not remit the supply of taxes to those who are disinterested enough to contribute of their own accord, and surely the highest of all duties in a free state should not be left to voluntary efforts. Now, such a system as I have indicated would in effect make every able-bodied man contribute his share of defence, and that in the way least irksome to himself. Those who could afford it would be trained as volunteers; those who could not afford it would be trained at the expense of the nation."

"But this is a digression. At any rate, whether the voluntary system be continued or not, the principle I am contending for is not invalidated; on the contrary, just in proportion as the volunteers stop short of efficiency does the need become greater for turning the militia to the best account. And for this it is absolutely necessary that the mode of officering them should undergo a complete change. Instead of militia officers as much inferior to the line in professional acquirements as the men of the one force are to those of the other, you want the very best experience you can command for that service. The popular notions, therefore, about officering the militia by a special

another part of the kingdom,—if functions of this kind are to be denoted by the style of captain or colonel, then no doubt the present system is a right one. But if military rank is to signify, as it used to do, something coupled with obligation to be sent on instant service to any part of the world, and to give up one's life whenever required to do so, then it seems to me these titles have been wantonly misapplied. The honorary promotion given on promotion is another unwise measure in my opinion. Every officer who, on retirement, is entitled by length of service to a pension, is also advanced to a step of honorary rank. This accounts for the country being so brimful of generals. A general nowadays does not mean a man who has fulfilled the duties of a general, or who may have to fulfil them hereafter, it means somebody who has once been a colonel. The result of this reckless misapplication of military rank is that the titles held by the combatant grades have become thoroughly depreciated, and a cheap but efficient mode of remunerating the officers and the army has been entirely sacrificed."

"But are not these honorary titles given as an inducement to men to retire, and do they not thus tend to accelerate promotion and prevent that stagnation which you admit to be one of the great difficulties to be contended against?"

"Honorary rank may, no doubt, act as an inducement, but I think it does more harm in one way than good in the other. Besides, when men are entitled to retiring pensions, you may enforce retirements by suitable rules to any extent you think proper, and therefore it is not necessary to hold out special inducements for the purpose. For my own part, I think the whole system of promotion to the rank of general officer, even on the active list, calls for re-

form. The list is much too large, and the promotion to it altogether too indiscriminate. Of all grades, this is the one to which a claim to promotion by mere seniority should least be recognised. But this is a minor blemish compared with what goes on in the Indian army, where a state of things has lately arisen which, in a military point of view, is simply nothing short of scandalous."

As I made this reference to the Indian army, I trembled for the continuance of the conversation, knowing by experience that the subject is one which people generally, and members of the Government in particular, can never be got to attend to. If talking with Lord Stowe, I used to observe that at the very mention of India his eyes assumed a dreamy aspect, as if he were looking at a wall a hundred miles behind me, or were thinking of his dear Sophia and the rest of his girls. When I opened the subject to Bracton one day, he cut me short by saying, "My dear fellow, the Sandwich Islands ain't under this department." I thought indeed I had found a congenial spirit in Mr. Sinnick, for when one night, while sitting next him on the Treasury bench, I made some allusion to the needless burden on the finances of certain army arrangements, he pricked up his ears; but on my going on to explain what I meant, he said, "Oh, if it's only the Indian army they are wasting money upon, it doesn't matter; we don't pay for it;" and thereon, folding his arms, resumed his peaceful slumber. But Mr. Merrifield had the power of true genius in his capacity for going into details as well as in mastering principles—a very rare power among statesmen, as among the rest of the world. And in the present case, to my great delight, he expressed an interest to hear what I had to say about the Indian army, adding

that he had often felt a curiosity to learn something of its organisation.

Thereon I explained the system of the new Indian Staff Corps, with the preposterous conditions involved. How, under the old system, the objectionable state of things, under which half the regimental officers of the Indian army were detached from their regiments in various civil capacities for indefinite periods, often extending over a lifetime, was disguised under the nominal condition that such officers were available to join their regiments if required to do so, although as a matter of fact they never were required, or if they had been, their occupations for ten or twenty or thirty years as magistrates, or bridge-builders, or superintendents of government farms, or clothing agents, would have quite unfitted them to resume regimental duty. That thus the Indian army, although a homogeneous body of regimental officers, was divided in effect into two distinct parts, the real soldiers and the nominal ones, all, however, getting their promotion by seniority in the same way. How this state of things, which more than anything else had tended to demoralise the army, had now been replaced by a still more extravagant misuse of military rank and promotion. For, whereas every officer used before to belong nominally to some specific regiment, in virtue of which he obtained his promotion from time to time, even this semblance of military obligation had now been given up, and a gigantic sham, called the Indian Staff Corps, had been created, which had nothing to do with the staff, or any corps or military body whatever, but was simply a clumsy vehicle for giving military rank to a great body of civil *employés*, whose connection with the army began and ended with this rank, and who were employed as magistrates, judges,

surveyors, road-makers, book-keepers, and in all the other multifarious duties which make up Indian administration. "In this country," I said, "a major or colonel, if not belonging to the regular army, still, if he belongs to the militia or volunteers, has military obligations of some sort, however slight; but an Indian staff-corps officer is very possibly of a sort that under no conceivable circumstances can ever be employed as a soldier. He is simply a person who, in virtue of having entered the army as a youngster, and obtained some appointment in India, henceforward gives up all military duty whatsoever, but is nevertheless entitled to promotion at stated intervals to the rank (rank only, his pay does not depend on his rank, but on the nature of his civil duty; he may be making laws, or he may be making bricks, and is paid accordingly) of captain, major, and so on, throughout the different grades, till eventually he becomes a general officer. Thus by-and-by Oheltenham and Bayswater will swarm with these generals, who have never so much as commanded a company—men who have not been on parade for thirty years, and who some of them could not ride a mile to save their lives. Never was there such a prostitution of military rank before.

"It is not to be supposed Lord Carteret had any distinct notion of what he was doing when he established these Indian staff corps. His object was apparently to create a cheap form of civil service, by paying men partly in rank instead of wholly in money; but that the thing should have been tolerated so long is incomprehensible. The only reason can be that people in this country will not be at the trouble of understanding Indian affairs of any kind.

"The result," I went on to say,

"is that the Indian army, as regards a large number of its officers, is a thoroughly unmilitary body. It is, in fact, living on the reputation of a small part of it, and of a few distinguished members, while India itself is a British Algeria, in which the natural advantages for developing military qualities have made us indifferent to the need for cultivating artificial ones. A considerable part of that army is nothing better than a very badly armed militia, and the whole wants reform. But however that may be, there can be no doubt about the non-military character of the colonel accountants and judges. Living, as many of them do, in out-of-the-way places, where they never see a soldier from one year's end to the other, they have not even the military experience to be got by a volunteer review at Brighton. This might be merely a negative evil, except that the system out of which it arises cheapens military rank in the British army as well. What we have to do, I conceive, is to make the honourable military title more in estimation than ever. No man should be called a general who has not actually exercised a general's command, and all nominal titles and honorary ranks should be abolished."

"You have certainly made out a strong case for doing so," observed the Minister, when I came to the end of my harangue, over which I am afraid I became quite excited.

"I am glad you think so. For similar reasons I think the conversion of the first captains of my regiment into majors was a mistake. Our officers were naturally tired of being only captains, and no wonder, for a captain nowadays is a mere nobody, especially in India, where nearly half the regiment is serving; but the proper remedy for that was to make the captain a big man, not to depress him still more, as has been

the effect of this new artillery organisation."

"In fact a process of levelling up?"

"Precisely so. In this love of titles inherent in mankind you have, I think, a mine that may be worked to any extent. Hitherto this coinage of honour has been undergoing continual degradation, one branch of the service after another getting some sop thrown to it in the way of increased promotion, or relative rank, or honorary rank, and so on, till military grades have come to be something quite different to what they used to be thirty or forty years ago. Our policy should now be, I conceive, to work back again. Restore the purity of the coinage; make military rank something worth having, and you may save a great deal of what will otherwise have to be laid out in pay and pensions."

"There seems a good deal of force in what you say," observed Mr. Merrifield, "but there appears another side also to the question. If your plan would have the effect you appear to expect from it, of making military rank a thing more in estimation than before, may it not also operate to render men less unwilling than they are at present to leave the army, and so create the very evil to be guarded against of blocking up promotion, which is one of the objections brought against the abolition of purchase?"

"That might certainly be a tendency of such a policy, but I think it could be prevented by suitable arrangements. After all, however, this matter of promotion is merely a minor point as compared with the scheme I mentioned the other day, for obtaining the army which has to be officered. And another measure of army reform still more needed involves also a much more radical change. This I have not yet mentioned."

"True, I am anxious to hear what that is, for you have done no more than mysteriously allude to it so far. But bless me," added Mr. Merrifield, looking at his watch, "I had no idea how late it was. We shall never be back at Stamp-ton Court in time for dinner, unless we hurry back."

It was indeed getting late, our conversation having been a very protracted one. For, as I have before explained, the reports given here are no more than brief abstracts of what really passed. In fact, I have no more done justice to my companion's share in the conversation, edifying and delightful though it was to listen to, than did the Roman historians detail fully what took place at Carthage. The result, however, of all the digressions and disquisitions into which we branched off, and which I have perforce omitted to repeat, was, that notwithstanding the two opportunities afforded for speaking freely, opportunities such as might never occur again, Mr. Merrifield rode back with his party to Stampton before I had entered into the branch of my subject which I thought would have had for him the greatest interest.

"Well," said Mary Drew, after her distinguished visitors had ridden away, "I am so glad to have spoken to a real live Prime Minister. Of course I knew that he must be a human being, but it seems almost impossible to think that it is not some delusion. I always fancied a great orator like Mr. Merrifield must be something like the statue of Lord Chatham which I saw in the Houses of Parliament when papa took me to London. I don't mean, of course, with any robes on, for I know you gentlemen of the House of Commons don't wear them, but standing majestically with one arm perpetually stretched out, defying

Mr. Braham and everybody else. It was difficult to fancy it could be the same person who makes those great speeches and governs the whole country, that was sitting here like an ordinary mortal taking five o'clock tea, and talking so unaffectedly to us as if we were just as good as himself."

"Mr. Merrifield is such a dear old man," said a languid voice from the sofa cushions.

"Old!" cried Mary; "the idea of connecting age with such a person! It seemed to me when he was talking as if I were listening to some one who might be of any age."

"Well, my dear, but he is old. Look how bald he is, ever so much balder than Lord Stowe, and Lord Stowe says himself that he is quite an old man, and I am sure he must be, for Lady Sophia is a regular old maid."

"Eva has been spoilt by all the intellectual society she has been mixing with in London. I suppose if you get accustomed to the splendour of these shining lights you may find the use of your eyes in time, as Eva appears to have done already, but when they come to visit us simple country folk, we are so dazzled that we have no sight for human blemishes. I should no more have thought about whether one of these godlike creatures was old or young, than an ancient Greek would have thought about asking the age of Apollo or Venus, if he fancied he saw the incarnation of those deities."

"Do you include Lord Stowe in your pantheon of godlike creatures, Mary?" asked Eva's husband. "If you had seen him on the moor the other day with his comfortable worsted stockings and high shirt collar and a plate of cold chicken on his lap, or at one of our board meetings trying to look wise over an item in the army estimates, you would hardly have recognised the superhuman elements in his organism."

"Oh, Lord Stowe is different, of course, because I have been accustomed to see him walking about Leatherby ever since I can remember. I suppose familiarity disillusions one. I daresay if we had never seen you till after you had made your speeches and become such a great man, we should have been dreadfully afraid of you too; but now I can never fancy that you are really a Minister."

"Not quite a Minister, Mary. The gradations of the Government officials are very well marked, I can assure you, and there is almost as much difference between a Cabinet Minister and an understrapper like myself as there is between a captain and a corporal. A paymaster-general is a very small item in the official hierarchy, isn't he, Eva?"

"My dear Charlie, as if it were any good asking me! I never shall understand all these distinctions. You know you laughed at me the other day, because I asked how old

Admiral Mayne Toppe could be a Lord of the Admiralty when he wasn't a lord at all. It seems to me that the only difference between Cabinet Ministers and other people is that they talk such prosy stuff."

"Prosy, Eva?" said Mary; "I am sure you can't say that Mr. Merrifield was prosy this afternoon. He seemed to be delightful. I could have gone on listening for ever."

"Oh yes, Mr. Merrifield can make himself very pleasant; and you see to day we were only a lot of girls to talk to. But you should have heard him and Charlie and Mr. Strickland after dinner in the cottage. There was no drawing-room out on the moor, you know, so we all sat together after dinner till it was time to go to bed; and they used to go on about politics and taxation and organisation, and stuff of that sort, till I could hardly help falling asleep." And Eva spoke almost crossly, as if something had vexed her.

MONTALEMBERT.

IN recent history—which has produced many remarkable, if few great men—there is hardly any more interesting name than that of Charles Forbes René de Montalembert. A certain chivalry and *elan* of personal character, combined with a strangely-mingled fervour of political and religious enthusiasm, gave to him a prominence which considerably transcends any of the results of his life. Men of this stamp, in whom character often greatly exceeds accomplishment, the charm of whose personal life and manners carries captive many admirers, are always among the most interesting historical figures. They are the true inheritors of fame, which rightly seizes upon character as the supreme human reality, and brings to the front those whose lives have been lit up with the glow of some enthusiastic purpose, good or bad, rather than the men who have quietly followed out details of action, and, it may be after all, done more or even better work.

To Mrs. Oliphant's fertile pen we owe a memoir of Montalembert as fascinating as the hero himself—graceful, beautiful, full of life, enthusiasm, and earnestness. It is a singular piece of good fortune which has assigned to the biographer of Edward Irving the task of writing the memoir of one who, in quite other circumstances, had something of the same lonely, unhappy, unfulfilled longing in his life—something of the same ideal loftiness in his aims, and tragic heroism of struggle and failure in his career. Both men were eminently picturesque. Their figures filled the imagination, and somewhat dazzled

it. Both were supreme orators in their way, swaying others for a time with an irresistible force, personal rather than rational, impassioned rather than enlightened. Such lives especially need to be admired and loved before they can be understood. They must be studied with something of the same fervour of imaginative enthusiasm which made their own inspiration, and treated with a generous delicacy in all the changing features which enthusiasm in any life never fails to assume. This is what Mrs. Oliphant has done in both cases, and more successfully, as it appears to us, in the case of the French patriot than in that of the Scotch preacher. The latter subject was, no doubt, more native to her genius; but in the present case she has had the advantage not only of a wider canvas and more matured skill, but of personal knowledge. In order to write, with ample insight, the life of a man who has recently left the world, it is necessary, in some degree, to have known him—to have seen him live and move. It is by no means necessary to have been intimately associated with him as one of his set or party. Such identification of interests is more apt, perhaps, than anything else, to blur the biographic insight, and distort that sense of proportion and finish without which biography becomes mere personal annals, more or less interesting according to the subject. But to have seen and conversed with a man—to have had our intellectual vision of him quickened by direct contact, and the recognition of the

Memoir of Count de Montalembert, Peer of France, Deputy for the Department of Doubs. A Chapter of Recent French History. By Mrs. Oliphant, Author of the 'Life of Edward Irving,' 'S. Francis of Assisi,' &c. William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. 1872.

characteristic soul behind his public movements—gives a touch of reality to biographic details which nothing else can give; and in the hands of an artist like Mrs. Oliphant, lifts them out of a haze of mere description into the light of life.

Mrs. Oliphant's knowledge of Montalembert was just such as to serve the purpose of a biographer. She made his acquaintance first intellectually, as the translator of his great book, the 'Monks of the West,' published in 1860; and afterwards personally, during a residence in Paris. His public career was by this time ended. His character had become in a measure historical, while he still lived. As an Englishwoman and a Protestant, Mrs. Oliphant was outside of any party interests with which Montalembert had been identified. These interests for the time, in fact, were all in abeyance; they did not require to be thought of, while yet his genius, vivacity, and nobleness, survived in all their original charm. He was the same enthusiast for "God and Society" that he had ever been. His mind was richer, if not wiser or higher, from the quiet medieval culture in which it had been long engaged, and through which his biographer came to sympathise with and admire him. His gifts had ripened to their full fruitfulness, while the mists of prejudice and astonishment had cleared away from some parts of his career, which must always remain unintelligible to his English admirers. It was Mrs. Oliphant's good fortune to know Montalembert in these later years, as a friend who had been attracted by the pure force of his character and genius, and who could enter with delight and appreciation into all the intellectual and patriotic impulses of his life, without any admixture of party passion or blind religious zeal.

The result is that she has presented in these volumes a very complete picture of this remarkable man—a picture which probably satisfies his friends, and yet is by no means a mere panegyric. It is sufficiently panegyric, as many in this country, and in France too, will think. The hero is drawn somewhat uniformly in a heroic attitude. The inconsistencies of his mental and political moods are too slightly brought into the light—are perhaps inadequately appreciated. There are marks of haste and carelessness here and there in the composition of the volumes. But the portrait is from first to last living and interesting in its outline. The writer has thrown herself with marvellous success into the spirit of the career which she sketches. She has been able from original sources, and especially by the kindness of Madame de Montalembert—who has warmly entered into her task, and rendered it most valuable assistance—to bring before her readers, in many vivid touches, his youth and private life. She has followed the intricacies of his public life, especially of his relations to the late Emperor of the French, while Prince-President, not only with enthusiasm, but with discernment and sagacity. Other disclosures may still be necessary to bring out clearly his final position in the Church for which he spent his life, and towards the great Papal system which so continually filled him with distrust, but which he refused to see with any eyes save those of love. But the man himself, in his characteristic greatness, his mixed heroism and weakness, in the plenitude of his gifts and aspirations, his successes and failures, is as fully sketched in these volumes as he is ever likely to be. The portrait may be set in clearer surroundings, or made more intelligible in some of its details; but it is not

likely to be drawn in happier outline, or more to the life.

Charles de Montalembert was of noble French descent through his father, of Scottish origin through his mother. The Montalemberts belonged to Poitou, and were a distinguished family, devoted to war and chivalry, from their earliest appearance in history. One is mentioned among the four "gentlemen of Guyenne," amongst whom the most chivalrous of French kings, Francis I., included himself, and who were ready, he said, "to encounter all comers in France." This same Montalembert became one of his Majesty's Chamberlains; but the courtiers said of him that he was more fit to give the enemy a dressing than to dress the king—"Plus propre à donner une camisade à l'ennemi qu'une chemise au roi." A later member of the family was well known in scientific warfare. The brother of this distinguished engineer was the grandfather of Charles. He was one of the nobles driven from France by the great Revolution, "whose beautiful melancholy face," Mrs. Oliphant says, seems "the most natural mood of a man of his class at that terrible period." The sad and romantic-looking French *émigré* is well contrasted with the "comfortable, well-to-do countenance" of the Scotch grandfather Forbes, as "types of different worlds as well as different races." "The cycle of chivalry, of romance, of poetic elevation, with all the grace of misfortune, shows in the one;" in the other a "calm countenance," surmounted by "trim peruke;" "strong in English prosperity and progress; expecting nothing but good, hearing of nothing but victory." Such was the strangely-mingled descent of Charles de Montalembert. There can be little doubt which element entered most largely into his blood. Both were

present, as many circumstances of his life prove; but he was withal far more a Frenchman than he ever was or could have been an Englishman.

Yet his early youth was far more associated with his grandfather Forbes than with his French father, who was the only child of the exiled nobleman of 1789. He appears to have been born in his grandfather's house in Albemarle Street, and at the age of fifteen months was entirely given over to his keeping. The young Count, his father, had at first entered the English army; but on the restoration of the Bourbons in 1814, he went back to France. Charles remained with his grandfather in the quiet security of a comfortable home—"the object," says his biographer, "of that adoring love, a sentiment at once more tender and more absorbing than simple paternity, which so often, passing over the head of one generation, links age and infancy together in the most beautiful of connections." Mr. Forbes had a pretty country retreat at Stanmore, near Harrow, and a well-filled library, where he spent most of his own leisure hours, and where the young Montalembert probably first awoke to a consciousness of intellectual life. The whole atmosphere around him was full of love and thoughtfulness for the boy's mental culture. His grandfather was an accomplished man, with a turn for natural history, and spent his time chiefly in the preparation of a large illustrated edition of certain "Oriental Memoirs" in which he had embodied his scientific experience of the East, where he had spent his manhood, and made his fortune. While he worked at this book his baby grandson seems to have been his constant companion. "He wrote fond letters to the baby, to serve as prefaces to his great work. He placed a portrait of the

little face he loved so well, drawn by his own hands, with pretty garlands of grandfatherly verse as the frontispiece. . . . Never was a more wonderful monument of an old man's love. The spectator gazes at the baby portrait looking at him with round blue eyes out of the ample page, with that faltering laugh which has tears in it. This was Charles de Montalembert as he appeared at Stanmore more than half a century since, looking up from the corner in his white frock and blue ribbons, the delight and joy and sacred hope of the old philosopher's heart."

The quiet and pleasant life of the young Montalembert with his grandfather lasted till the boy was nine years of age, and he had grown into early and precocious intelligence, "becoming more and more the companion of his grandfather." Frequently they went to Brighton together; and in 1816, when Montalembert's father was appointed by Louis XVIII. as Minister Plenipotentiary for France at Stuttgart, they paid a visit to his parents in France, before they left, and remained there for some time. During this stay he began his studies at the Scotch College at Paris; and on their return to England a year later, when Charles had reached his eighth year, his grandfather sent him to school at Fulham. This, the old man says in a letter to his daughter, dated 28th April 1818, was to him "a trial of no common kind," and the scene which he describes in the same letter on parting with the boy shows this very touchingly. Perhaps there is something of undue self-consciousness on the boy's part; but his peculiar mode of life had nourished in him a feeling of self-importance which crops out rather disagreeably through the whole course of his youth. He had been all in all to his grandfather, the centre of a domestic world without

any rival, and a feeling of his own consequence was the natural growth of this position. He adjures his grandfather, on parting with him for school, to answer truly the question which he puts to him. "I promised him I would," says the proud grand-parental heart, in writing to his daughter; "and I now give to you and Montalembert the very words in which the sweet child then addressed me: 'You know, my dear grandpapa, that I have left my papa and mamma, my brother and sister, at Stuttgart, to be your child; and now you and I are everything to each other until we see them again. Tell me therefore—but you must tell me truly—if since we left Paris I have been the boy you expected and wanted me to be, and if you love me as much as when we were there altogether?' It was almost too much for me," the old man adds; "but I could with truth assure him that he had been all and more than all, I anticipated. Then said he, 'I am the happiest boy in the world, nor shall I drop one tear when you leave me;' nor did he." This is very charming in its way. It looks, as Mrs. Oliphant says, like a bit of "some more delicate Sandford and Merton;" but even allowing for the modishness unconsciously imparted to the boy's talk by his grandfather, there is a taint of moral conceit in it which is not without its likeness in some after-features of his life.

Mr. Forbes died suddenly on a visit to France, and henceforth young Montalembert entered upon a new life, in the house of his father and mother, which, natural as it was, hardly seems to have suited him so well as the old one. The Count, his father, was a busy man; his mother was still young and lively, and fond of society; and he seems to have missed the interest and attention bestowed upon

him in his grandfather's house. Little is seen of him for a time, till, at the age of thirteen, he emerges as the diarist of his own life and feelings. Throughout life he continued this habit of diary-keeping, and his biographer has naturally drawn largely upon this source for her information of many of its incidents and impressions. The commencing pages of the youthful diarist do not contain much, but they show little glimpses of character. The life of mere amusement in which he finds himself plunged for a time seems to have been irksome to his early-developed sense of duty. "Day lost, like so many others!" records the young moralist. His political and religious sentiments grow apace. He was an enthusiast for the charter of 1814, and frightened his younger brother by making him swear eternal fidelity to it. His Catholic enthusiasm was quickened by the reception of "a member of his family, born a Protestant," into the bosom of the Church, and by his own formal admission as a communicant. His neglected studies also were resumed under the care of M. Gobert, one of the professors of the College Henri IV. He was a busy student, and grudged the distractions which interfered with his work. "Sometimes he is carried off to the theatre, and is amused and forgets himself; but in society in the evenings yawns his weary head off, and frets against the silken bondage." He wrote comments upon the authors that he read, amusing in their simplicity and decisiveness. When about the age of sixteen he went to the College Sainte-Barbe, of which his friend the Abbé Nicolle was the head. Here he spent two years in earnest study and aspiration, and formed friendships which he retained through life. The great thought which never ceased to animate him, which became, in fact, the

motto of all his labours—"God and freedom"—here first took shape. Solemnly, with a congenial soul, he bound himself in a sacred act of self-consecration to serve these objects. This "solemn league and covenant," executed by the young enthusiast, and which he wished in the fervour of his feelings to sign with his blood, still exists in the possession of M. Cornudet, the friend who joined him in it, and who never ceased to follow his cause with "sympathy, interest, and affection;" and it may probably see the light in the pages of the 'Contemporain' in which his old companion in Sainte-Barbe is now publishing a collection of his youthful letters. He was seventeen when this bond was made, and in the same year his commonplace-book contains the following entry—"God and liberty—these are the two principal motive-powers of my existence; to reconcile these two perfections shall be the aim of my life?" Many years afterwards, in revising this early record of his feelings, he seems himself to have been struck with the precocity of his youthful ambition, and has characteristically marked this entry "Déjà!!"

He left Sainte-Barbe at the age of nineteen, without carrying any prize with him, although he had previously, in the year 1828, gained the first prize for a *discours* or speech in French. He rejoined his parents in Sweden, whither they had gone for a time, and where the old life of gaiety, formerly so irksome, awaited him. His solitary and somewhat stilted figure in the gay circle in which he mingled without interest seems to have been an object of ridicule to some of the Swedish ladies. "*Pédant et altier*," one of them afterwards told him she had thought him; and coming from clever and charming lips, the words

wounded him keenly, and probably did him good. But if he was formal on the surface at this time in the consciousness of the grandeur of his youthful aims, he was sharply observant, as he always was, of all that he saw or heard, and his journal contains "an extremely lively sketch" of the Swedish Court and its surroundings—the swaggering "trooper monarch (Bernadotte) and his wife, who had been an inn-keeper's daughter before becoming a queen." He studied also carefully the institutions of Sweden, as his elaborate article on the subject only a year later proves. And foremost among all his thoughts came forth the great objects to which he had consecrated himself—religion and freedom. Catholicism was now and always to him religion, and "Catholicism, in order to triumph, must have liberty as its ally and tributary;"—so he writes to his friend Rio, the future historian of Christian art, whom he numbered thus early among his warm friends. German philosophy occupied some share of his attention by the advice of M. Cousin, who continued for a while his intellectual adviser, although afterwards, as may be supposed, they were much divided. "I am reading Kant, whom I find terribly difficult," he wrote to Rio. "M. Cousin recommended me to give myself up entirely to that study; but I shall not follow his advice." Nothing was less likely. Montalembert's mind, with all its noble and powerful impulses, had no affinity for such studies. He was throughout life impatient of sifting principles to their last results, and holding them before his mind in pure rational abstraction. His genius was poetic, rhetorical, and in a less degree historical, but in no degree philosophical. The speeches of Burke and Grattan were therefore, as we gather from

the same page, far more congenial studies than Kant, or even "the great Schelling," of whom he speaks as "so ill understood in France." Grattan particularly attracted him "as the unwearied champion of the greatest of causes;" and the same cause consecrated for him the eloquence and labours of O'Connell, in a manner that now seems marvellous and hardly credible in our eyes.

Inspired by enthusiasm for the Catholic champion of Ireland, he resolved to make an expedition to that country. His purpose was temporarily interrupted by the illness and death of his sister, and also by the outbreak of the Revolution of 1830. He had returned to France with his mother and sister, the latter of whom suddenly closed her brief life by the way; and was alone with his mother in Paris in the beginning of this year. He was plunged in profound grief for her recent loss, and otherwise unsettled and unhappy. "Sometimes for a moment he thought of becoming a priest; sometimes of joining as a volunteer (*simple soldat*) the expedition to Algiers, which was then setting out." It is hardly necessary to say that he carried out neither purpose, but remained in Paris, prosecuting, among other studies, that of the law, and writing his article on Sweden, which, on being completed, was shown to M. Guizot with a view to its publication in the '*Revue Française*,' of which he was editor. The article was duly published, but much curtailed in dimensions, to the great disgust of the young *littérateur*. In his journal there is no allusion to political matters at this time, big as it was with fate for France. He seems mainly occupied with the farther literary friendships which he now formed. Among others he met and made friends with Lamartine, with Sainte-Beuve, "who, curiously

enough, was then beginning life with something of the same visionary religious enthusiasm which stimulated Montalembert himself;" also with Victor Hugo, "then the poet of all sweet and virtuous things," cherishing the hope of "a universal religious restoration and rebirth of the world." Now also he formed his first connection with the 'Correspondant,' the same well-known Catholic periodical to which he contributed all his life.

At length, in the end of July and on the very eve of the Revolution, he set out on his projected journey to Ireland. The news of the overthrow of the elder Bourbon race overtook him in London, and in hot eagerness to be in the midst of the political fray, he returned to Paris; but only to be sent away again by his father, "somewhat discomfited and discouraged, and full of many conflicting thoughts." He had longed, in the first moment of exaltation, to fight for the people; but the people were no sooner victorious than his sympathies cooled. As all his life showed, *a cause when triumphant had no attractions for him*. "Je n'aime pas les causes victorieuses," he said; and his life is a continued illustration of the truth of the statement. The interests of his family, moreover, were seriously embroiled; and as he resumed his journey to Ireland, he began to ponder, with the precocious confidence characteristic of him, that "freedom never gains anything by such violent movements."

We cannot touch upon the incidents of his Irish journey, so graphically described by Mrs. Oliphant; his visit to "the great Dictator;" and his disenchantment both with O'Connell himself and his eloquence; the "sweet Irish girls" at the house of Lord Donoughmore, with whom he read poetry, and with whom he fain would have stayed some

time longer; his visit to Maynooth, and the striking scene described by his own pen of the mass which he saw in a country chapel, "the men kneeling in the mud, all uncovered, though the rain fell in torrents and the mud quivered beneath them." The experiences of the journey served to dispel some of his illusions. But it was also the turning-point of his life, deepening his ardent devotion to Catholicism, and confirming in him the hitherto half-resolved purpose to give himself to the service of the Church and of Freedom! These twin ideals of his young enthusiasm seemed to him united in the Irish Church, sitting like "a dethroned queen" among her people, the guardian of their faith and of their rights, all the more glorious in her rags and poverty to his dazzled vision. Here was an object worthy of all his ardour and labour! Here religion was the emblem, not of successful power, but of patient suffering. Here she was plainly on the side of the people, while Protestantism was represented by a cruel Anglo-Irish aristocracy and a barren hierarchy! This was the tone which he brought away with him from Ireland, and to which he gave vent in the following year in 'L'Avenir.' There, in his 'Lettre sur le Catholicisme en Irlande,' he drew "the most terrible picture of the impositions of the Irish Established Church and the wrongs of the Catholics." Nothing, perhaps, can give a better idea of the essential defect in Montalembert's political instincts—the singular incapacity which characterised him now, and more or less always—even after his illusions had been broken in pieces in the harshest manner—of getting down to the hard basis of fact or reality in the great movements of his time. It was, no doubt, a charming enthusiasm in the young Catholic, which

led him so to idealise the Church of the Irish peasantry; but an enthusiasm which blinds while it exalts, and which can transmute even the ugliest features into a divine vision, is a dangerous gift. More than once Montalembert was destined to be the victim of such enthusiasm.

The first great epoch of his public life, which Mrs. Oliphant has appropriately entitled "*L'Avenir*—'God and Liberty,'" was the natural outcome of his Irish Catholic enthusiasm. It is somewhat absurd, while extremely interesting, to trace the influence of O'Connell, and the stand which he was supposed to be making for national and Catholic freedom, upon the movement now initiated in France, of which the famous newspaper '*L'Avenir*' was the expression. France was in one of its fits of "Liberal" ecstasy. "The Charter—the free institutions—it guaranteed, the self-government which it held out to the hopes of the nation—was the popular idol. But in the midst of this impetuous rush towards political freedom, the Church remained in bondage." Why should this be so? Why should the Church not be free as well as the State, with right to appoint her own bishops and educate her own children as she wished? The general question is one which it is far beyond our present purpose to pursue, and which it can hardly be said that the enthusiastic writers of '*L'Avenir*,' with all their earnestness and ability, opened to its depths. For the primary question, which is an essential condition of any true answer being returned to the other, they never fairly asked themselves, What is the liberty of the Church? Is it moral, or is it also political? If the Church is restrained by any power outside of herself from communicating freely the Truth which she holds as a sacred treasure imparted to her for the good of men, she is certainly in

bondage. If she is not free as a teacher, her essential vitality is attacked and endangered. And so far Montalembert was undoubtedly right in the long warfare which he waged, and which he at length carried to a successful issue, for liberty of religious instruction. But the Church—above all, the Roman Catholic Church—is everywhere a great political institution as well as a teacher. She claims not merely moral but social and political rights of the most extended and pervading character. The time had been in France, as in other countries, when she not only monopolised the rights of education, but the rights of the family, and in a large degree the rights of the State. And her use of these rights had not been encouraging. A theocracy "free to use every faculty for the advantage and succour of man"—which "free itself, should be the natural defender of all liberty—which, acting on God's laws, and not on man's, should be the same everywhere—awful to the evil-doer, tender to the penitent, making religion a reality and not a form"—is a fair ideal; but then there never has been such a theocracy. And statesmen have to deal with facts and not ideals. The worst that can be said for the French statesmen of the Revolution of 1830 is, that their experience of ecclesiastical power had been such as to shake their faith in religious ideals, or even religious truths altogether. In the infidel reaction following the great Revolution France had been allowed to sink into a withering and hopeless secularism, nipping its youthful national life at the root, and yielding a stunted harvest of many evils, the end of which is not yet. It was not only a noble but a true enthusiasm which led Montalembert and his colleagues to vindicate a place for religion in the national life and government, to proclaim that society without God

is a soulless and corrupting mass never far from anarchy. But that they should have seen any model for their mission in the work of O'Connell,* or that they should have been capable of so little historical and rational analysis as to identify religion with the Catholic Church in Ireland, or even in France, this was an indication at once of weakness and of falsehood in their position which gave sure presage of their downfall. The very Church they wished to serve, to whose cause they had consecrated with such touching earnestness all their gifts, repudiated their aid. The Court of Rome understood its own mission better than they did. It admitted "their good intentions," but at the same time silenced them as inspired by a zeal without discretion in the treatment of "supremely delicate questions"!

Never was there anything more pathetic in its way than the journey made by Lamennais, Lacordaire, and Montalembert to Rome, in search of light and guidance, and, if possible, approval in the cause on which they had entered. To Montalembert it was a matter of far less moment than to others what the great oracle might say. True, his faith was not less sincere or ardent than theirs; but he was as yet merely a young writer. They were both priests, and Lamennais one whose fame had already reached through the whole Catholic world, and attracted to him personal respect from the late occupant of the Holy See. It was for him above all, therefore, a matter of life and death how his conduct should be viewed, and whether the principles to which he had only reached after long scrutiny and in the maturity of his years (he was already fifty) should be sanctioned by Papal

authority. The result shook, as it could hardly help doing, not only his Catholicism, but his faith. Proportioned to the intensity and honesty with which he had given up his mind to Rome, while leaving it open on the side of political theory and action, was the agitation into which the scheming indifference of the Papal Court threw him. He retired to work out anew for himself the whole theory, not only of political but of religious duty, with consequences which filled his former friends with alarm and terror. They retired submissively. Rome claimed their obedience, we shall not say in defiance of their reason—for the question of reason against Church authority never occurred to them—but irrespective of their own judgment and views altogether. This is quite an intelligible position. No one can know anything of either Lacordaire or Montalembert who supposes that they were influenced by any mere personal considerations. No men probably ever acted under a higher sense of duty; only they never thought of duty in the case apart from the Pope. When they saw what the result was likely to be, they quietly and without struggle bowed the knee. The position is intelligible, but hardly great or magnanimous. Submission may be heroic in a grave practical crisis, which admits of no argument, but it is hardly so in questions of truth and right, which have roused the conscience as well as the judgment to vigorous action. We confess to following Lamennais in his disdainful retirement with far more interest than we contemplate the "Catholic submission" of his colleagues. Duty loses its higher heroism when it loses individuality and passes into blind self-surrender. Driven from his career as a

* "The cause," says Lacordaire, "was the same, the means alike, the talent equal. However, the difficulties were greater for M. de Lamennais than for O'Connell."

journalist by Papal disapproval, and unable until he was twenty-five to enter upon his political duties as a peer of France (his father had died in the interval), Montalembert betook himself to travel in Germany; and here in the course of his wanderings caught his first genuine literary inspiration. Hitherto he had only written articles chiefly of a political tenor. He now encountered accidentally an historical and sacred subject fitted to call forth all the best qualities of his genius. He had come to Marburg on his way to Frankfort. This little town is beautifully situated on the banks of the Lahn, and is strangely rich both in Catholic and Protestant associations. The beautiful church of St. Elizabeth—one of the finest in Germany, with its two stately towers—carries the mind back to the thirteenth century, and all the sad yet lovely self-sacrifice of that most tender and exalted of mediæval saints; while the grand old Burg crowning the heights along which the town lies, recalls the famous conference between Luther and Zwingli which took place in its now deserted hall. There are few spots more picturesque in themselves, or more picturesque in the memories which start around the steps of the historical student. Montalembert reached it on the *fête*-day of St. Elizabeth, of whom apparently he then knew little or nothing. He visited the church, in which, "now devoted to the Lutheran worship," he found "no trace of any special solemnity except that in honour of the day; and contrary to Protestant custom, it was open." He roamed through its vast and desolate aisles, "still young in their elegant and airy lightness." He searched out with difficulty a life of the saint, written by the Lutheran superintendent, whom he found to be a man "as intelligent as a Protestant can be."

And the result of all was, he became so captivated with the subject that he resolved to give the world an account of the saint in a fresher and more attractive form. St. Elizabeth became for the time his heroine—the centre of his wanderings. He tried in vain to visit her cradle at Presburg, in far-off Hungary; but the Wartburg, "where she came as a child, and where she loved as a girl, and was married to a husband as tender and pious as herself," was within easy distance, and thither he bent his steps, tracing here and elsewhere all memorials within reach of this saintly vision which had arisen before him.

It is a pity that the impartial biographer should have to note his narrowness in the midst of his generous enthusiasm. The presence of Luther hardly seems to have been felt by him at Marburg; but at the Wartburg it was impossible to escape the rival association. The burly figure of the German Reformer obtruded everywhere here. "Everything," he exclaims, indignantly, "is Luther." With all the generosity of his nature, he could find no room in his heart for the great German Reformer. "The Wartburg was to him like another Holy Land in the possession of the infidels." And so the Lutheran worship was cold and repellent, without any solemnity, although there are few things more delightful to this day than to see the church of the holy Elizabeth filled with a congregation chiefly of Hessian peasants in their bright and curious costumes, and to hear their hearty praise swell through the beautiful aisles and along the fretted vault of the old church. It is surely a pleasant and elevating thought to recognise the identity of the simple-hearted devotion which, after so many changes, still finds its shrine here, with all that was real in that ancient worship which was dear to the Saint

of the thirteenth century. But Montalembert recognised nothing of all this with all his love of the past. His historic insight was fine, minute, and picturesque; but he lacked depth of historic judgment, and strength and range of sympathy. Here, as everywhere, *fact*, with its complex variety of association and breadth of human interest, was not so attractive to him as sentiment, and the curious personation with which it can invest the most obvious realities. His 'Life of Saint Elizabeth' was published in 1886; and with all its beauty and grace of outline, and charm of portraiture, it does not gainsay this judgment.

Returning from his travels, Montalembert married a daughter of the great Flemish family, De Merode, sister of the now well-known Mon-signor de Merode; and after a wedding-trip to Switzerland and Italy, he settled in Paris, and fully entered upon his distinguished public career. Space would fail us to follow him through its successive stages, admirably described in Mrs. Oliphant's second volume. A very difficult task could hardly have been executed better, and the strength as well as the tenderness and felicity of her genius comes out nowhere more clearly than in her treatment of this part of her subject. We cannot say that the second volume of the Memoir is more interesting than the first, because the first unveils that part of Montalembert's life hitherto least known, the growth and ripening of the convictions which guided his life, and the details of which we have therefore thought likely to interest our readers; but the second volume, if not the more interesting, is the more able of the two. It contains more substance and thought, and, as if conscious of the weightier matters which she handles, the writer holds her pen not more grace-

fully, but with more consistency and thoroughness of finish.

Montalembert's career as a politician divides itself into two great periods: the twelve years or so which preceded the Revolution of 1848, and the four critical years which succeeded that great event. Louis Philippe was chased from the throne, which he had certainly not dignified, in Feb. 1848, and on the 29d of January 1852 appeared the decree for the confiscation of the property of the House of Orleans, which happily led to Montalembert's instantaneous withdrawal from a sphere in which he had lost beyond question something of the clearness of principle which had hitherto guided him, and with which all the chivalry and nobility of his nature were at variance.

The first of these periods is chiefly marked by his great struggle on the question of education. His arena was of course the Chamber of Peers, to a seat in which he succeeded on the death of his father. The French Upper House did not possess the historic dignity or authority of our House of Lords, and being an artificial creation, was destined soon to disappear before the violence of popular tumult. In the midst of such a formal assembly the voice of Montalembert sounded with a surprise half-pleasant, half-terrible, always awakening. It stirred like a trumpet the dead echoes of the place. He dared to say anything which he felt to be the truth. "He could even," says Sainte-Beuve, "give free course to his mordant and incisive wit, and make personal attacks upon potentates and ministers,"—and all with a felicity of diction which charmed his fellow-peers while it made them shrink. "In one or two cases the chancellor called him to order for form's sake; but the favour which attends talent carried everything before it." "It

was a sight full of interest," says another, "to see this ardent, enthusiastic, impetuous young man rise in the midst of the Chamber of Peers, composed almost entirely of the relics of past conditions of society—men grown grey in public business, conversant with politics, and among whom experience had destroyed enthusiasm—and disturb with the accents of an impassioned voice the decent calm, the elegant reserve, and the polite conventionality of their habitual discussions, as he vindicated the rights and interests of that religion which was said to have no partisans but old men, and no life but in the past."

Montalembert's eloquence was of the highest order, judged by that which, after all, must be the supreme test of all eloquence—the effect produced upon those who heard it. It was always impassioned and lofty, with a slight touch to the British reader of mere rhetorical elevation, even in its most famous passages, as in his apostrophe to liberty, and his personification of the Church as a mother in his great speech in 1849. The strength of his convictions and the fulness of his own feeling carried with him for the time even those most opposed to him. Interruptions only helped to swell the torrent of his passion, or to give a deeper barb to his invective, of which he was a great master when he pleased. Under all the sway of his emotion, or even the loudest reclamations, he never lost self-control, or sank, as so many French speakers do, into hysterical exaggerations. His English blood here stood him in good stead, especially when, no longer in the Chambers of Peers, but in the National Assembly, he encountered the liveliest opposition. "I am not used to these interruptions, gentlemen," he said on the first occasion on which he addressed the new National Parliament of 1848, "but

I am here to reconcile myself to them, and I will do so." He did so, as he himself records, with "complete success;" and the consequence was, that his oratorical reputation never reached such a height as in those memorable years. "It was only after 1848," says Sainte-Beuve, "that M. de Montalembert ceased to be a party orator in order to become an eloquent politician (*orateur tout à fait politique*)." His last speeches were at once his most solid and most brilliant. He had previously spoken for a comparatively small party, and been chiefly admired as their representative. He now spoke under a consciousness of national importance, and was admired and followed by men from all parties. He had "ceased to see everything from one point of view," and became for a time not merely the chivalrous champion of the rights of the Church, but a political power. Not only in the question of education, which was so dear to his heart, and to which he had given, he himself said, "twenty years of perseverance and self-devotion," but in many other matters, he carried his views. He succeeded, and was gratified by his success, forgetting his old dislike to victorious causes. And all this mainly by his eloquence. He worked hard as a member of the Commission, which, under many difficulties and compromises, prepared the new law of education known as the '*Loi Falloux*;' but his influence was always, even at this time, due in the main to his powers as an orator. Like many other men of the oratorical temperament, he was not fitted for Parliamentary diplomacy and intrigue, or the many acts behind the scenes by which political power is often acquired and maintained. But when fully excited in the tribune he carried all before him. Men who had otherwise no sympathy with his

opinions were driven forward by the torrent of his eloquence. His great speech on the Roman expedition, was followed, says the 'Débats,' at no time a lover of the orator, "by such cheers as no one remembers to have heard in any deliberative assembly." Thiers, his old opponent, whose good opinion was worth having, said, "He is the most eloquent of men, and his speech the finest I have ever heard." Berryer addressed him in the words, "Your strength lies in this, that you are not absolute, but resolute."

It would have been well for Montalembert, as Mrs. Oliphant hints, if he had now paused in his political career. He had gained the chief object of his political ambition: he had secured the freedom of religious instruction. But the success was for him in a sense dearly bought. The new law of education, which he regarded as a fair settlement of the question, failed to satisfy the extreme and most noisy section of the Church. The 'Univiers' denounced the law, and those who had been successful in carrying it, in its most virulent language. "Never," it said, "had the disorder, the impossibility of agreement, the decay of doctrine, the disgust of fighting for the truth, the weakness of all hope in the triumph of truth and justice, shown themselves more sadly. Catholic ministers have afforded this spectacle. . . . The Catholic party has lost its chiefs," whom it accused of "denying their principles and uniting themselves to men like M. Thiers, in order to prevent liberty of teaching from becoming law." The revolutionary press attacked him on the other side, as having surrendered his principles and consistency. He felt these attacks somewhat bitterly. He was left without natural support or backing from either side. He had no longer a definite rôle to play in the political arena. It was true that he

was not, and never could be, a party man in the ordinary sense; and this very fact had greatly contributed to his influence. But while not a party man, and in recent years, when his eloquence and influence had reached their full height, less a party man than ever, he had yet been supported by the consciousness that he was the champion of religion and the Church. It was something very different to look beyond the Church to the nation, and to be cast, altogether apart from his old attachments, upon the whirling pool of French politics which preceded the *coup d'état*. Hitherto he had been known to have a certain *clientèle* always behind him. "Now all at once," as his biographer says, "his following failed him. He ceased to be the Catholic party: he became plain Charles de Montalembert—Citoyen de Montalembert, as the folly of the period entitled him—a man with such a voice as few possessed, but with only one vote—as much and no more than any Dupont or Dupin in the Assembly." At first he did not realize all the disadvantages of this change of position, but gradually the sense of his isolation pressed upon him painfully. He was destined to some renewed successes in the Assembly, and his courage never rose higher than in his famous attack upon Socialism. It was then that, in allusion to the defence of Rome by the Catholic army of France, a national act which engaged his keenest sympathies, he uttered the daring words, "We must recommence the expedition of Rome within ourselves" (*expédition de Rome à l'intérieur*). The words were caught up, dissociated from their context, and made the occasion of virulent comment, not only in the French but in the English press. Unsupported by his old ecclesiastical connection, denounced by the advancing revolution, imperfectly united to the moderate or constitutional

party, of whom Thiers may be said to be the representative, he was left without any clear clue amidst the growing perplexities of the political situation.

This confusion, aided undoubtedly by that fair and generous enthusiasm which was always enchanting his vision, must be held to be the explanation of his conduct before and after the *coup d'état*. Strange as it appears in the light of his more mature opinions, he *believed in Louis Napoleon*. Thiers, "old statesman and man of the world," when he heard of the President's re-election on the 10th of December, saw with a clear vision what was coming, and exclaimed, "L'Empire est fait;" but "to Montalembert's more generous, more believing mind, such cynical belief of all good motives and confidence in all evil ones was impossible. He even held up in his wonderful simplicity this very saying of Thiers, admitting the truth of it; doing more,—admitting that the mass of the peasants who voted for Louis Napoleon believed they were voting for an Emperor; and then called upon France and the world to see how wrong were the meaner interpretations of this man's motives, and how just his own generous belief in his truth and virtue. 'Has he responded to that idea? Has he shown the least appearance of yielding to those imperial sympathies?' cries the generous advocate. 'No: he came here loyally, honourably, instantly, to this tribune to take to the 'Constitution and to the Republic' an oath which he has never broken!'"

It is needless to trace the history of Montalembert's disillusion, and the bitter succession of events which proved his generous words, in his biographer's language, to be "folly"—a "folly half divine;" but nevertheless indicative of that lack of insight, that defective grasp of reality, which the warmest ad-

mirers of his genius must allow. Even the *coup d'état*, with all its horrors, failed to break his dream; and it was only on the January following (22d January 1852), when the decree for confiscating the Orleans property appeared, that the veil fell from his eyes. His famous letter of the previous December (December 12), in which he urged the claims of Louis Napoleon upon the support of Catholics, was one which all his friends desired to forget, and to which he himself never afterwards cared to allude.

The nineteen years which followed the close of his public career were in some respects the most honourable, as they were probably, with all their sad reflections for the state of his country, not the least happy of his life. The researches in which he engaged with a view to his great work, 'The Monks of the West,' were in themselves a constant source of delightful activity. It is impossible to read the introduction to this work—the two first volumes of which appeared in 1860—without seeing how much happiness he had in these researches, and the task of composition which followed. After enumerating his labours "in search of a date, of a fact, of a name, of a striking or speaking detail," and his prolonged interview with "so many great and holy souls who came out of the shadow of the past to reveal themselves by their acts or their writings," he exclaims,—“all these pure and profound enjoyments of a conscientious historian—behold them finished!" "Things won are done: joy's soul lies in the doing."

His visits to England, partly in pursuit of the same object, were also full of pleasure to him. His fame had grown in some degree from the very fact of his retirement from a political career. The purity and disinterestedness of his character, the brilliancy of his literary and oratorical gifts, the mellowed wis-

dom and breadth of judgment that had come with advancing years and leisure for calm reflection, all served to gather honour around his name, and to draw to him the love and admiration of many who could only imperfectly sympathise with the special aims of his political ambition. Many who met him during these visits remember the charm of his manners, at once graceful and manly, and the vein of good sense and play of humour which lay beneath all his religious enthusiasm, and lit up his talk in a degree which could hardly be supposed by those who merely knew him from his writings. It was somewhat difficult to realise in the shrewd and highly-accomplished man of the world, all whose words were weighty with incisive and practical meaning, the historian of cloistered saints and mediæval legends. His reputation probably reached its highest point when the Imperial authorities were so ill advised in 1858 as to prosecute him for an alleged secret attack upon the Empire in an article which he published in the 'Correspondant,' giving an account of the famous debate in the House of Commons on Lord Canning's proclamation as Governor-General of India. His prosecution proved a signal triumph to him in all respects, and had the singular advantage of presenting him for the last time before the world in the attitude which, above all, he would have probably most desired,—of an advocate for the freedom of the press, on behalf of which he had made his first speech in the Chamber of Peers in 1836.

During these latter years he lived partly in Paris, but for the most part in his country home in the Côte d'Or, known as La Roche en Breny. Mrs. Oliphant has given a charming description of his family and literary life in this fine old house—of his delight in the growth of his trees, and his pleasant, half-

cynical interest in his village neighbours, who were sometimes disposed to be troublesome. He appears to have been the happiest of husbands and fathers; and the brief glimpses of his *English* correspondence with his daughters—for he liked to write to them in the language familiar to his own youth—are as bright, tender, and beautiful as can be. He had been threatened with some grave malady even before he quitted public life; and during his last years, in which he continued to work with unabated enthusiasm at his great work, he suffered from constantly-recurring attacks of this malady. At last, he was unable to work, apparently for nearly three years before his death. He had "no chance and no hope," as he said, of recovery, and only desired to leave the world as quickly as possible. In this strain he wrote in February 1869. He survived for more than a year, and died worn out with suffering, but in the full consciousness of all his powers, on the 18th of March 1870.

A braver or more chivalrous spirit never passed from earth. He was a veritable *miles Christi*—*Chevalier de l'Eglise*—as he liked to describe his monastic heroes. He was much besides—a picturesque historian, an eloquent orator, a keen and in many respects enlightened politician; but his religious chivalry was the essence of his nature. No monk of old ever consecrated himself with a more cordial devotion to the service of God and the Church. No knight ever fought more gallantly for the cause dear to his heart. Shall we say, in the view especially of his last words on the doctrine of Infallibility—which he struggled against to the last, and yet was prepared to accept when once proclaimed—no hero of the cloister ever offered, as the sacrifice and service of his faith, higher powers or a more entire—only too entire!—self-submission?

LA BRUYÈRE.

WHEN Pascal said that the best books are those which each reader thinks he could have written himself, he must have restricted his meaning to those books which are spun out of the writer's innermost cogitations on what he sees—books of observation and reflection on the life, manners, movement, and thought around him. No reader thinks he could have written a history or a scientific work without previous training. It is books which make man their study,—man, his character, motives, his general portraiture,—which under certain points of excellence seem easy writing; for the subject lies open to us all. Nothing, as our authority says, is more common than *les bonnes choses* (things worth noting and saying). They are all within our reach, and even known to everybody. People strain after excellence; expect to find it in things strange and extraordinary. They should rather stoop and look close. It is near at hand. The only question is how to distinguish it; and this is precisely what ordinary people do not miss in themselves—a keen discernment; an eye to see what lies before them. When a thing is said to them or read by them which they have had equal opportunities of finding out, they suppose it a mere accident that they never thought it before; or perhaps they do not recognise it to be new as well as true. And yet what excellence is more distinctive and incommunicable than insight, the quality constituting the worth and charm of the author now lying before us, who himself has written, "*After the spirit of insight and discernment, the rarest things in this world are diamonds and pearls,*" and has warned people especially against

acting on the impression that to write of what passes under their eyes is easy; counselling them, if they condescend to be imitators at all, to take any style and subject for their model rather than the writers who spin out of themselves, *tirent de leurs entrailles*, all that they express upon paper? The warning is needed, for there is this especial temptation to imitate them, that it is on the trite and threadbare (under common hands) that these writers *qui écrivent par humeur, que le cœur fait parler*, leave their mark—as, for instance, these two Frenchmen. The sombre genius of Pascal added a new sadness to death in the reflection, *Je mourrai seul*. The social spirit of La Bruyère derives comfort from death's universality. We are all in the same boat. It might have been worse. "If of all men some died and others not, to die would then be a desolating affliction." Both are alike removed from the conventional, Justice-Shallow recognition of a fact they cannot grasp. "Certain, 'tis certain, very sure, very sure, death, as the Psalmist saith, is certain to all. All shall die. How a good yoke of oxen at Stamford fair."

It is, in truth, the characteristic of all good books of this class, and that in a special sense, that nobody could have written them but their authors. Wherever we find them they are models and masterpieces of style. This, indeed, is an essential of their existence. Good writing is exact writing. It is delineation and thought sensitively true in touch and outline; and to express a man's own conceptions, he has in a common sense to invent his own medium. Every good style is instinct with a double truth—the thing drawn and the

artist who draws it. He does not—that is, he ought not—to aim at anything but the rendering of his subject; but he can only do this in his own way. His truth becomes a truism in another's wording; his discoveries vanish unless he himself declares them. For, old as is the study of humanity, nothing is tolerable that can be written about it unless it has flashed on some mind as a new thought, and been delivered with that close, careful rendering which makes style and thought inseparable and almost convertible terms. "Horace or Despreaux have said it before you," was the criticism La Bruyère had to combat. It was through his style that he justified himself. "I believe it on your word," is his answer; "but I have said it (*comme mien*) in my way. May not I think true thoughts after them as others will think them after me?" It is not so much the thought he values himself upon as its clear expression, the art concealing art, the labour of composition. "What art is needed to be natural (*rentrer dans la nature*)! What time, what rules, what attention, what labour to dance with the liberty and grace with which we walk, to sing as easily as we talk, to *speak and express one's self* as one thinks!" And it is on this art, this perfection of style, that his fame now mainly rests with his countrymen. Foreigners must study him chiefly for the truth, vivacity, and variety of his observations, and the caustic humour of his characters; but M. Charles Asselineau, the editor of the present new and handsome edition (itself a testimony in these troubled times for France), gives, in his introduction, the successive stages, the three points of view, which three centuries have taken of his great work. "By his contemporaries, at the time of his election into the Academy, 1693, he was viewed

mainly as a satirist. The following age regarded him as a moralist: it was as a moralist that he interested and occupied men's thoughts. And this preoccupation lasted into the early years of this present century. In our own time men regard him as a writer, and more than a writer, as an artist."

There are reasons in these days why we should all turn to these classical writers with a particular inclination and interest, from the importance they attributed to diction, and the sense of duty they attached to it. A thing was not said at all until it was put in a well-fitting and graceful garb. They felt obscurity which any pains of theirs could obviate—an obscurity not in the nature of the subject—as a crime and disgrace. They would not desist or think their work complete till it had received the last touch. Writing needed as much training as a delicate handicraft. "It is as much a trade—a *métier*—to write a book as to make a watch." The one exacts as fine finish as the other. They were pioneers to their readers, the mountains and rough places were to be made smooth for them; the desert of arid discussion must blossom as the rose before they would invite them to walk in it. Mr. Browning's argument in favour of burrs of expression—that they stick—had not yet crossed the brain of writer or reader. Thought was not thought in the rough. *Tout est dit*, all has been said already, are La Bruyère's opening words. It was only through the medium of a transparent style that he ventured to add his gleanings to the rich harvest of past thought. As his sentences arranged themselves he felt they were worth something.

Perhaps all this bears on the fact that he wrote in the period when readers represented society, and society represented, to the literary

mind, mankind. 'A fine style was part of good manners. A man writes to be read by somebody. A writer of that day knew to a nicety who would be his readers. They were represented by the friends or small gatherings assembled to hear him read his own performance. We can scarcely estimate the effect that this ceremony of reading his own works to an assemblage of critics would have on an author's system of composition; but we are very sure that it would make him mind his *p's* and *q's*. Some it would tempt to affectation, some to epigrammatic terseness. No one could wholly forget the manner in the matter, nobody would dare to be diffuse from mere hurry and precipitation with such an ordeal in immediate view. Where there was stamina and well-founded self-reliance, we can believe the result to be a fineness and grace, a felicity of adaptation of words to thought (*tant de sens dans une phrase, tant d'idées dans un mot*), such as we find in these pages. But, hard as La Bruyère laboured after perfection of style and the character of artist, we yet give him such credit for honesty in the profession of higher aims, as to believe that the title of moralist would have answered best to his own designs, as well as pleased him best; but a moralist careful to utter no platitudes and few hard sayings, almost too hopeless of mending men to be indignant at their errors and vices. "Why should we be angry," he asks, "on seeing their hardness, their ingratitude, their injustice, their pride, their self-love, their forgetfulness of others? They are made so; it is their nature. We might as well be angry on seeing the stone fall or the flame rise." "Men are not light and changeable in great matters. They do indeed change their dress, their language, their manners—sometimes their taste changes; but they

keep their vices, still constant in wrong and in their indifference to virtue." But men being such as they are, he knew himself to be one of them; there is the keenest sense of brotherhood. It is not what *they* do, but what *we* do. The follies, weaknesses, vanities of men, he read through his own sympathy in them. Nor could he imagine a keener interest, a worthier labour, a more lasting diversion, than men such as he saw them supplied to him. If men are to be mended, it must be by showing them what they are. His book was a mirror. He formed no system, founded no school. It is all very well to *be* a philosopher, but he objected to be called one. He recognised his subject and his genius, and left the issue to work itself out.

Not much is known of La Bruyère as a man, but what is known adds an interest to his work. He had his singularities and eccentricities. He was honest and disinterested; his friends esteemed him. Nobody had any harm to say of him beyond the discrepancies of an awkward brusque manner, with the exquisite finish of his style. He is supposed never to have married; nor can any amount of research trace to him any less creditable connection. He lived in the house of the great Condé as preceptor of his grandson, the Duc de Bourbon. Here the court and the great world were open to his observation; he knew everybody worth knowing. The editor draws a comparison between him and St. Simon, both engaged in the same task, at the same moment, of painting their own age—the one in what he calls his shop (*boutique*) at Versailles, La Bruyère in l'Hotel de Condé: St. Simon more occupied with the acts of men than their characters, his object the machine of state rather than the men engaged in working it; La Bruyère interesting

himself less with the machine than the workmen. St. Simon, the survivor, wrote of him warmly: "The public soon after" (La Bruyère died 1696) "lost a man illustrious for his genius, for his style, and for his knowledge of men. I would say La Bruyère, who died of apoplexy at Versailles, after having surpassed Theophrastus in taking him for his model, and having painted the men of our time in his *Nouveaux Caractères* in an inimitable manner. He was besides a very worthy man, (*fort honnête homme*), a pleasant companion, simple, with nothing of the pedant, very disinterested. I knew him well enough to regret him."

This summary of good qualities scarcely satisfies the demands of modern research, and M. Edouard Fournier, in his *Comédie de Bruyère*, has found material for a psychological study in the passing notices of the day. Boileau, for instance, writing to Racine (May 1687,) speaks of a visit he had received from the author of the Characters, "who would want nothing if nature had only made him as agreeable as he wishes to be." He seems to have dreaded the charge of pedantry, and did not always succeed in playing the fine gentleman. People who could not appreciate his talents found something to ridicule in his manner. He had sallies of somewhat awkward liveliness, alternating with fits of silence and abstraction. All accounts agree that he was without the talent for conversation; and his life seems to have alternated between an eager curiosity to see, to hear, to know all that was passing, and a profound rumination upon what he had observed in this busy activity of eye and movement. Some of his characters of men, unequal, hasty, inquisitive, capricious, fanciful, are supposed to be self-portraiture. He was, in fact, as perhaps genius itself implies, two men,

one for thought and one for action; the genius seldom affording the man much aid in the commerce of life. His present editor, in summing up these chance indications of a character, adds his view, that in the grave matter of religion, morals, and politics, he was "*un prudent*." "He had the prudence of men much occupied with their own thoughts, to whom all external disturbance is an evil. A settled state of things (*une extrême décence au dehors*) is a necessary condition for independent thinkers of this class." In one rare instance he was fortune's favourite, that from the first his book was appreciated and read with avidity. The form helped this early popularity. Society was eager to give names to his characters. Malignity, as it was said, contributed to the early success of his work. He seems to have been anxious to disown this personal application in many instances, which is no wonder; but the cap fitted too close for the world, once put on the scent, to leave its hold, and the keys which were immediately circulated are lasting authorities. It is never made clear how the subjects of these caustic representations took it. Nor do we observe that any inconvenience ensued from them to their author.

The romance of La Bruyère's history very properly attaches itself to his great work. Through it a young girl's name is indissolubly associated with his own. Everything he writes on woman shows the sentiment that youth is the period, not only for the graces of her body, but of her mind. Society, frivolity, vanity, hypocrisy, spoil her after a time in his eyes. He is cynical towards the woman of fashion; but woman in early girlhood is depicted by him with an exquisite appreciation. As his present editor says, the child represented to him the true ideal woman. What she grew in

to was the fault of the world, of her ill fortune, of husband, of lovers. There entered into his love of woman something of paternal tenderness. Those who know the story of his manuscript will bear its repetition for the sake of others who do not. It chanced that Michallet, the bookseller to whose shop he daily repaired to hear the news and turn over the new books, had a little daughter, "*fort gentille*," with whom he made friends and amused himself. Playing one day with this child, he took out of his pocket the manuscript of his *Caractères*, and offered it to Michallet, saying, "If you get anything by it, let it be the *dôt* of my little friend here." In a pamphlet dated 1701, which gives the portraits and reputed wealth of the financiers of the day, there is a notice of Remi de Jully, *fermier général*, who married Michallet's daughter, La Bruyère's little friend, receiving with her a fortune of a hundred thousand livres. Never, says M. Asselineau, was a girl dowered with so much wit and wisdom in money's worth. An anecdote like this gives a body to the often vague and merely ornamental term disinterested.

It is our object to give to the reader not familiar with the original some idea of a French writer in the truest sense a classic; whose work, as far as we know, has not been translated into English, probably because its essence has been felt too volatile for translation. Perhaps this may especially be said of the style of all humorists, amongst whom we class La Bruyère, rather than with wits. Humour is flavoured by the personality of the writer almost more than wit. A striking felicity, whether of thought, of penetration, of satire, may change its whole character with its vehicle of expression; it may shock us as *outré*; it may sink into common-sense, or even common-

place, in an uncongenial diction. We will therefore first justify our own appreciation by the testimony of a great modern critic, Sainte-Beuve, who thus apostrophises the genius of his countryman after two hundred years of fame: "Happy La Bruyère! (*Heureux homme que La Bruyère!*) when so many more lofty glories have sunk, when the eighteenth century has passed away, and men speak of it as of an old fashion—when the seventeenth itself is exposed to attack on all sides, to the irreverence and incredulity of new schools—he, as if by a miracle, is alone respected, he alone holds his own, he is spared. What do I say? He is read, he is admired, he is praised, precisely for the marked incisive manner, a little too strong perhaps for his own time, but which is no more than we require now. Of this style he remains the first model. Fénelon, all Fénelon, pales and vanishes; but his colours stand as bright as when first laid on the canvas. Time has deprived his solid and vigorous manner of no excellence. The artist has not ceased to reverence him. . . . He is still everybody's classic (*classique de tout le monde*)." "Happy La Bruyère!" adds the editor, in conclusion. "Whilst other and greater names compromised their destinies and their genius in the miserable agitations of public life and social entanglements (*relations mondaines*), he led an obscure life, the more surely to secure future fame. Having lived worthily, he has immortalised his name by a unique work, and has left to posterity nothing of himself but his genius."

Of the sixteen subjects into which La Bruyère classes his thoughts and characters, he chooses to begin with that which touches upon his own relation with his readers, *Des Ouvrages de l'Esprit*—prefacing all with the words, "I restore to the Public what it has lent me. From it I have

borrowed the matter of this work: it is just that having finished it with all the attention to truth of which I was capable, and that it deserves from me, I should restore it to the Public again, that it may scrutinise at its leisure this portrait which I have taken after nature, and if it owns to any of the faults I have touched upon, to correct itself of them. . . . It is the only end an author ought to propose to himself." He writes with the consciousness at once of merit and of care. He would not have his readers neglect the order of his chapters. All is done with design. Nor must they restrict his range to his own countrymen or the Court of France. His was a wider field—his subject was human nature itself. And after this exordium he enters upon the subject of books—book-making ancient and modern—authors and critics; betraying some personal experiences, while hinting at the vicissitudes of feeling that accompany the supreme effort of thought. He is curiously candid, and lets us know that he turns his phrases as solicitously as a poet his lines. There is nothing of the modern *laissez aller*, letting the style take care of itself. In fact, a thought is not presentable, or worthy to be called one, till put in the best form. "Among all the different expressions which can render a single thought, there is," he says, "but one good one. We do not always hit upon it in speaking or writing. 'Tis true, nevertheless, that it exists. Anything else is feeble, and does not satisfy a man of wit and intelligence who wants to make himself understood." It is a question of conscience with him. "If you would write naturally, vigorously, delicately, you must *express the truth*." "A good author who writes with care, often finds the expression long sought for and found at last is the simplest and most natural one; which seems

as if it should have presented itself first of all." This must be true in a sort of all writing whose praise is its simplicity: we cannot imagine it otherwise with much of Addison, or of certain inimitable examples of the *naïf* in the *Lettres Provinciales*. Yet this care is mostly its own reward; for "Fools read a book and don't understand it. Commonplace readers (*les esprits médiocres*) assume that they understand it perfectly. Men of large intelligence do not therefore understand everything—what is obscure they find obscure, and what is clear they find clear. Persons of showy parts (*les beaux esprits*) profess to see difficulties where there are none, and won't understand what is perfectly easy." To understand with him means a fuller apprehension than the ordinary reader or listener supposes. "Certain poets," he observes, "are subject in their dramas to long strains of pompous verse, which seem full of vigorous, elevated, and noble sentiments. The people listen greedily, eyes uplifted, mouth open, and believe themselves charmed. The less they understand the more they admire. Scarcely do they take time to breathe, or to clap and applaud. I used to believe in my early youth that these passages were clear and intelligible to the actors, to the pit and amphitheatre—that their authors knew what they themselves meant, and that, with all the attention I could bestow, it was my own fault that I could not follow. I am undeceived." His opinion of popular taste is on a par with its intelligence. "Wherever you go," he remarks, "whether to a sermon, a concert, or a picture-gallery, you hear diametrically opposite opinions of the same thing, and may safely set good and bad side by side. The good will please some, the bad others. You risk nothing in putting

the worst along with them. The worst has its partisans."

The next subject, *Du Mérite Personnel*, opens with a reflection which Johnson, too, has put into words. "Who, whatever his merits, but must be convinced of his uselessness when he considers that in dying he leaves a world which does not feel his loss, and where there are so many to replace him?" Still he has an intense appreciation of success, and merit unrecognised pressed upon his sympathy as a constant pain. It was one of the evils of the system under which he lived. "How many men of admirable genius have died without the world knowing anything of them; how many live still of whom no one speaks, of whom no one ever will speak?" "What horrible labour for a man without party or backers who stands alone, with only merit for his recommendation, to lift himself out of his obscurity into daylight, to rise to the level of the prig (*fat*) in credit!"

"It needs in France," he observes, "much strength and largeness of mind to give up all thought of place and office, and to live at home and do nothing. Very few have merit enough to act this part with dignity, or weight (*fond*) enough to fill the void of time, without what the vulgar call business. The idleness of the wise man only wants another name—that thinking, talking, reading, and being quiet should be called work." After personal merit he recommends less individual distinctions. "If a man can't be Erasmus, let him think of being a bishop." "Some people, to get themselves a name, heap upon their persons titles, orders, primacies, the purple. Scarcely would the tiara accomplish their end; but what need has *Trophimys* (Bossuet) to be a cardinal?" In illustration of his subject he gives at length a fine portrait

of the great Condé, his patron; "great in prosperity, greater still when fortune failed him:" "whom the raising of a siege ennobled more than his triumphs, and got him more honour than battles won and cities taken; who could say '*Je fuyois* with the same grace as *nous les battimes*.' A man—true, simple, magnanimous—who wanted nothing but the lesser virtues." In another character he shows the value of personal merit through the want of it. *Menippus* (according to the keys the Maréchal de Villeroy) is the bird in fine feathers that don't belong to him. He does not talk, he does not think; he repeats what other people say and think, and makes use so naturally of the mind of others, that he is the first deceived, and constantly supposes himself to be declaring his own taste or explaining his own view when he is but the echo of the person he has just left: for a quarter of an hour, so long as his memory holds out, he passes tolerably, then flags, degenerates, and betrays the machinery. He alone is ignorant how far he sinks below the sublime or heroic; and, incapable of estimating mind in others, does not suppose anybody can be cleverer than himself."

By what process of the reason he makes *Des Femmes* his next subject is not very clear, but probably it was one his pen was very ready to exercise itself upon. We do not know how far it is reasonable to suppose affectation a vice of any particular date. Every age has its leaders and imitators—those who set the fashion in manners, and those who follow. Yet we imagine there was a certain deliberation and audacity in the affectation of La Bruyère's date which was particularly exasperating to the penetrating faculty. He must tell the ladies his mind, and that not with Addison's amusing lightness of

touch, as if he was charmed in spite of himself, but taking their paint, and the manners that go along with a daubing of white and red, in grave earnest, and letting them know how very disagreeable they are to a man of sense. He views woman not in her home and domestic relations, but in the scene of her display, of her efforts and her ambitions, and especially in the idle love-making which seems to have constituted the one interest of society. He begins his subject by distinguishing between the real and the sham in this question of manner. The real, great lady is an object of his reverence. "There is in some women an artificial distinction (*grandeur*), due to the movement of the eyes, the pose of the head, to step and motion, which goes no further; and a superficial brilliancy in conversation which imposes on us till we detect its shallowness. There is in others a simple and natural nobleness of air, independent of step and gesture, which has its source in the heart, and, as it were, is a natural consequence of their high birth; an intellect calm and solid, enhanced by a thousand graces which all their modesty cannot hide, which transpires, and which those who have eyes can see." "If young girls only knew the advantage of a natural manner," he cries, "and knew how much it is for their interest to abandon themselves to it; but they will weaken these rare and fragile gifts of heaven by affectation. Voice, step, everything is borrowed; they study their mirrors to secure a sufficiently wide departure from nature, and take pains to please less." So keenly did he feel the evil influences that surrounded woman in society, that there is pity in his severest strictures. He regards her as a victim—spoilt after two-and-twenty by the combined injuries to her moral sense of lovers and directors. In his short analyses of characters, as the *Coquette*,

the *Femme Galante*, the *Femme Inconstante*, the *Femme Infidèle* we have indications of a very frivolous and corrupt state of manners; but all culminates in the *Femme Devote*, a character which combined itself easily with all the rest, adding that varnish of hypocrisy, which seems to have been a very prevalent fashion in the last years of the *Grand Monarque*. He shows a high opinion of the intellect of women, considering them the best letter-writers, and seems to reproach them for not cultivating their gifts. "What laws are there to prevent their opening their eyes, their reading, and showing that they read in their conversation? Is not this custom of knowing nothing their own fault, either from the weakness of their temperament, or indolence of mind, or care of their beauty, or their taste for works of hand, or a natural repugnance for things serious and difficult?" But to whatever cause men owe their ignorance of women, he congratulates his sex upon it, as saving them from an absolute and complete subjugation. Let us take a few thoughts at random, as results of his observation on society, and the attitude of fine gentlemen and ladies towards each other, from this chapter:—

"It costs little to women to say what they do not feel. It costs less to men to say what they do feel."

"Women are in extremes. They are better or worse than men."

"A beautiful woman, with the qualities of a man of worth (*honorable homme*), is the most delightful companion in the world. She has the merit of both sexes."

"How many girls there are whose great beauty has done nothing more for them but lead them to hope for a great fortune!"

"There are few women so perfect as to prevent a man repenting once a day that he was ever married, or envying those who are not."

"People look on a learned woman as they do on some finely-wrought weapon out of vogue. It is chased artistically, admirably polished, of choicest workmanship. Its place is in a collection to be shown to the curious as something for which there is no use. Good neither for war nor the chase, any more than a circus horse, though trained to the highest point in its own line."

"It sometimes happens that a woman conceals from a man all the passion she feels for him; while, on his side, he feigns for her what he does not feel."

"I would that I might cry aloud with all my might to those holy men who have once felt the dangerous influence of women, 'Fly from them; do not direct them; leave to others the charge of their soul's health.'"

There is so much in the admirable chapter on Conversation—*De la Société et de la Conversation*—that choice of examples is difficult. It contains the celebrated, and, as contemporaries knew, just character of M. d'Aubigné, brother of Madame de Maintenon, who figures as an outrage upon every rule of social intercourse:—

"I hear *Theodectus* from the ante-chamber. He raises his voice as he approaches. He comes in; he laughs, he shouts, he bawls; one stops one's ears—it is a thunder-clap. He is not less terrible in the things he says than in his way of saying them; he only subsides out of the first din of his entrance to stutter out empty absurdities. He has so little respect for time, or persons, or good manners, that everybody comes in for his share of this impertinence without his meaning it. Before he has taken his seat he has unknowingly offended the whole company. Is dinner served? He sits down first, and in the first place, ladies on his right and left. He eats, he drinks, he tells stories, he jokes, he interrupts all at once; he has no sense of the claims either of master or guests; he abuses the absurd deference people show him. Does he, or *Eulidenus*, give the entertainment? He assumes the direction of

everything; and it is less trouble to leave him alone than to dispute the matter with him. Wine and good cheer make no difference in him. If play is introduced he wins, laughs at the loser, and offends him; but the laughers are all on his side; there is no fatuity which is not allowed to pass. I give in at last, and disappear, incapable of tolerating *Theodectus* any longer, or those who tolerate him."

His advice on the subject of conversation is mainly repressive, as addressing a nation of talkers whose object is success. "The spirit of conversation," he says, "consists far less in shining yourself than in leading others to talk. He who leaves you content with himself and the part he has played, will be perfectly satisfied with you. Men do not care to admire you, they want to please, and care less to be instructed, or even amused, than to be appreciated and applauded; and the most refined of all pleasures is that of making the pleasure of others." He is especially indignant at all tricks with the language and efforts at fine speaking, and breaks out, in startling remonstrance: "How! what do you say? I do not follow you. Be so good as to begin again. Still I don't understand. I guess at last; you wish, *Acis*, to tell me it is cold: why didn't you say it is cold? You want me to know that it rains or snows—say it rains, it snows; you think me looking well, and wish to felicitate me upon it; say you look well. But you answer, that is very straightforward and commonplace, everybody could say as much. What does that signify, *Acis*? is it so great an evil to be understood when one speaks, and to talk like everybody else? One thing you want, *Acis*—I am going to astonish you—one thing you want, that is sense (*esprit*)," &c.

In all excess of phrase he sees some form of weakness. "To say modestly of anything, it is good or

it is bad, and to give reasons why it is so, needs good sense and correct expression, and is one affair. It is much shorter to pronounce in decisive tone, which carries the proof with it, either that it is execrable or miraculous." He dwells on the talkers who keep sensible people silent, and reflects what a misfortune (*grande misère*) it is not to have sense enough to talk well, nor judgment enough to hold your tongue. This, he concludes, is the root of all impertinence. His analysis of the dogmatic tone accords with our experience. It is inspired by profound ignorance. "He who knows nothing undertakes to teach others what he has just learnt himself. He who knows much scarcely realises that others can be ignorant of what he tells them, and speaks very differently."

La Bruyère's disinterested spirit privileged him to treat the gifts of fortune—*des Biens de Fortune*—as a philosopher, and men's subservience to wealth, with contempt; though in no subject does he affect an entire superiority to the general sentiment. His conclusions in every case are formed as much from introspection as observation. The enormous inequalities of condition, the prodigious fortunes rapidly accumulated in his day by farmers of the revenue, and the disposition of the Church's wealth, offered a spectacle and suggested contrasts calling for the honest truth of his pen:—

"Contractors (*les partisans*) make us feel all the passions in turn. We begin by contempt for their obscurity, then follow envy, hatred, fear. Sometimes we esteem and respect them. They live long enough for us to regard them with compassion."

He likens the growth of these large fortunes to the cooking of a great dinner—the results may be appetising and exquisite, but if you could only see the ingredients in

preparation and the hands employed, what disgust and loathing!

"*Champagne* [recognised by the keys as one *Mounerol*] leaving the dinner-table, his stomach agreeably inflated, pleasant fumes of wine in his head, signs an order which is presented to him, and which would have deprived a whole province of bread if the mistake had not been found out. He is excusable. How can you expect a man in the first hour of digestion to understand that others may die of hunger?"

In the same strain our own poet moralises—

"And wretches hang that jurymen may dine."

"*Arfura* [a certain Madame de Bellizani] used to go alone and on foot towards the great portico of St —, heard from a distance the sermon of a Carmelite or doctor, seeing him at cross corners, and losing many of his words. Her virtue is obscure, and her devotion as little known as her person. Her husband enters into a lucrative contract. What a monstrous fortune in less than six years! She must go to church now in a coach. Some one carries her heavy train. The orator interrupts himself till she is seated in full front of him. She does not lose a word or least action. Priests intrigue to be her confessor; everybody wants to absolve her. The *curé* carries off the prize.

"That gay bachelor [*garçon*—Charles Maurice de Tellier, Archbishop of Rheims] so fresh and florid, and in such beaming health, is lord of an abbey and six other benefices, which altogether bring him in a hundred and twenty thousand livres a-year, paid in gold pieces. Elsewhere there are a hundred and twenty indigent families who never warm themselves in winter, who have not clothes to cover them, who often want bread; their poverty is extreme and shameful. What a division! And does not this tell us clearly of a future —*un avenir?*"

He uses an Oriental force of hyperbole in denouncing the oppressor:—

"Fly, retire; you are not far enough off. I tell you I am under the other

tropic; pass under the pole and into another hemisphere; mount to the stars, if you can; *m'y would*. Very well; then you are safe. I discover upon the earth a man greedy, insatiable, inexorable, determined, at the expense of whoever crosses his path and whatever it may cost others, to look after himself alone, swell his own fortune, and gorge himself with gold."

He consoles the reader with his experience that as nothing *lasts* but a moderate (*médiocre*) fortune, you may expect to see the end of all overgrown ones. Features, he observes, indicate the temperament and manners. It is the *mine*—the set of them—which tells us a man's wealth. The more or the less than a thousand livres a-year is written on the countenance. As for rising in the world, there are but two modes of doing it—either through your own industry or the imbecility of others. But after all, what a trouble! "If you have forgotten nothing, and make your fortune, what labour! if you neglect the smallest thing, what regrets!"

Attractive as it is, we must not linger on the chapter *De la Cour*, of which he truly says, as we may now say of its successor, High Society. "It does not make us happy, but it prevents our being happy anywhere else." He meditates on *Les Grands*, grudging them not their luxury and parade, their apes and their dwarfs, but the fact that they have at their service the best and highest intelligences—men who not only equal them in heart and sense, but *les passent quelque fois*. He is severe on a certain false modesty affected by the great. It is pure hypocrisy in men of a certain rank not to take the place due to them, and which everybody yields to them. "For it costs him nothing to be modest, to mix in the crowd which opens a way for him, to take a low place in an assemblage which nobody will allow him to keep. Modesty is of

much harder practice to men of ordinary condition. If they throw themselves into the crowd they get elbowed; if they choose an inconvenient place they must even stay there." It is from this point of view that he surveys life—the ordinary mediocre condition; mixing with the great and wealthy, but personally neither one nor the other. How is a man to hold his own and retain his self-respect under the circumstances?

The chapter *De l'Homme* opens with the argument already quoted—that it is no use being angry with men for their vices. The way, of course, not to be angry with these things is to make their analysis your business. La Bruyère would have found his time heavy on his hands upon any root and branch reformation in the human family. Yet surprise is sometimes struck out by thought. Things approved and familiar, which only remotely refer to human frailty, force the fact upon him: as when he exclaims, "Parchments (deeds) invented to make men remember, or to convince men of their word. Shame of humanity!" In this chapter he reviews humanity from childhood to old age; speculates on life and death, on man's sins, frailties, eccentricities. From this section Addison borrows his portrait of the absent man, "which La Bruyère has pushed to an agreeable extravagance:"—

"Menalcas comes down in the morning, opens his door to go out, but shuts it again, because he perceives that he has his night-cap on; and, examining himself further, finds that he is but half-shaved, that he has stuck his sword on his right side, and that his stockings are about his heels. When he is dressed he goes to court, comes into the drawing-room, and, walking bolt-up-right under a branch of candlesticks, his wig is caught up by one of them,

and hangs dangling in the air. All the courtiers fall a-laughing. Menalcas laughs louder than any of them, and looks about for the person that is the jest of the company [or, as the original has it, 'who shows his ears']. Coming down to the court-gate, he finds a coach, which, taking for his own, he whips into it, and the coachman drives off, not doubting he carries his master. As soon as he stops, Menalcas throws himself out of the coach, crosses the court, ascends the staircase, and runs through all the chambers with the greatest familiarity, reposes himself upon a couch, and fancies himself at home. The master of the house at last comes in. Menalcas rises to receive him, and desires him to sit down. He talks, muses, and then talks again. The gentleman of the house is tired and amazed. Menalcas is no less so, but is every moment in hopes that his impertinent guest will at last end his tedious visit. Night comes, when Menalcas is hardly undeceived.

"When he is playing at backgammon, he calls for a full glass of wine and water. 'Tis his turn to throw; he has the box in one hand and his glass in the other; and being extremely dry, and unwilling to lose time, he swallows down both the dice, and at the same time throws his wine into the tables. . . . He came once from his country house, and his own footmen undertook to rob him, and succeeded. They held a flambeau to his throat, and bade him deliver his purse. He did so, and coming home, told his friends he had been robbed. They desired to know the particulars. 'Ask my servants,' said Menalcas, 'for they were with me.'"

There is much more, every trait finding some response in our own experience, or illustrating the manners of the day. In *De l'Homme* he moralises on life. His is, in contrast with many writers, a cheerful view. Thus Pascal dwells with his whole soul on the common heritage of misery, scarcely relieved by vain struggles after forgetfulness and distraction. La Bruyère has

observed, what all experience will confirm, that "There are frightful and horrible calamities which we dare not think of, and the mere sight of which makes us shudder:—if it happens to a man to encounter them, he finds resources in himself of which he was not aware, he stiffens himself against his misfortune, and bears it better than he could have hoped." His estimate of the efficacy of distractions upon those less severely tried is a high one: "Sometimes it needs only the bequest of a pretty house, to find yourself master of a fine horse or a dog, but a piece of tapestry or a watch, to diminish the sense of a great loss." The only grief, he tells us, that time does not soften, is the loss of property. He finds some whom no trials touch, who may be said to go through life incapable of them; feeling them by deputy:—

"*Rufinus* shows some grey hairs, but he is healthy; his ruddy face and quick eye promise him twenty years more of vigorous life. He is gay, jovial, familiar, indifferent. He laughs heartily—laughs by himself without a subject. He is satisfied with himself, his belongings, and his small fortune. He says he is happy. He loses his only son, a youth of high promise, and who might one day have been an honour to his family. He turns over to others the task of grieving for him, and says, *my son is dead, it will kill his mother*; and he is consoled. He has no passions. He has neither friends nor enemies. Nothing disconcerts him, nothing puts him out. Everybody suits him. He talks as freely to strangers as to those he calls old friends. The first man he meets is told all his jokes and good stories. People come and go without his observing it; and the story he begins to one listener, he finishes to another: who happens to take his place."

In the chapter *Des Jugemens*, he analyses the fool in all his varieties. Elsewhere he has observed that there is in manner nothing so slight,

simple, and almost imperceptible, which does not disclose something of the man. "A fool neither comes in nor goes out, nor sits down nor gets up, nor holds his tongue, nor stands on his legs like a man of sense." Into the distinction of *sot* and *fat* our language can hardly convey us; for *fat* is not prig, nor fop, nor simpleton. La Bruyère reduces fatuity to a scale. A fool (*sot*) is one who has not sense enough to be a *fat*. A *fat* is one whom fools take for a man of merit. The impertinent is an extreme *fat*. The *fat* tires, wearies, disgusts, repels; the impertinent repels, exasperates, enrages, offends—he begins where the other ends. *L'homme ridicule* is he who, only so long as he is one, has the appearance of a fool. The fool is always ridiculous; it is his character. "Sometimes he enters into it with spirit, but he never comes out of it." "Folly is in the fool, fatuity in the *fat*, and impertinence in the impertinent." Sometimes the ridiculous lies in a man being really ridiculous, and sometimes in the imagination of those who think they see it where it is not and cannot be. The *stupid* is a silent fool, and so far more sufferable than the talkative fool. "Fools and provincials always think you are laughing at them. You must never risk the mildest, most permissible pleasantry, except with persons of sense and politeness." "It would be a hopeless project to attempt turning a great fool, also very rich, into ridicule—the laughers are on his side." Passing from fools, he speculates, among other strange things, on the genius that sometimes wears the appearance of folly or stupidity, and gives the portraits of La Fontaine and Corneille:—

"There is a man rough, heavy, stupid. He does not know how to talk, or to relate what he has just seen;

but if he sits down to write it, it is the model of good stories. He makes animals, trees, stones, all silent things talk. All is lightness, elegance, exquisite nature and delicacy. Another is simple, timid, wearisome in his talk. He uses one word for another, and estimates the value of his work by the money it brings him. He can neither recite nor read his own writings. See him inspired by composition,—he is not below Augustus, Pompey, Hercules! He is a king, and a great king; he is a politician, a philosopher. He undertakes to make heroes speak, to make them act. He paints Romans; they are greater and more Roman in his verses than in their history."

We have no space for the larger portrait of *Theodus*—his friend Santeuil—a greater anomaly than any, who took the caricature of himself in good part which describes him one "who speaks like a fool, and thinks like a man of sense," reminding one of many subsequent epigrams. In *La Mode* he dwells on the caprices and tyrannies of fashion—touches on the men's dress and the ladies' heads; but his examples are taken from other exhibitions of subjection to a reigning taste. When he placed his *Onuphras*, a rival hypocrite to Molière's *Tartuffe*, in this division of his great subject, it was to let his reader understand that he viewed much of the religion of the day (the latter part of Louis XIV.'s reign), as purely a fashion; or, as he elsewhere puts it—"Un faux dévot is he who, under an atheistical king, would be an atheist." We prefer taking as an example, from this subject, his innocent tulip-fancier, one Caboust, an *avocat* employed in the house of Condé.

"The florist has a garden in the faubourg; he hastens to it as the sun rises, and only returns when it sets. You see him transfixed, as though he had taken root in the midst of his tulips, and before the *Solitaire*. He surveys it with all his eyes; he rubs his hands, he stoops, he looks close, he

has never seen it so beautiful; his heart swells with joy. He leaves it for the *Orientale*—he turns to the *Veuve*, he passes on to the *Drap d'Or*, from thence to the *Agathe*, from whence he returns to the *Solitaire*, where he stands till he is tired, where he sits, where he forgets his dinner; so perfect is its shape, so exquisitely are the colours disposed. He contemplates it, he admires it. In all this it is not God of nature he admires; he does not go beyond the bulb of his tulip, which he would not part with for a thousand crowns, and which he would give away for nothing when tulips are out of fashion and pinks take their place. This man, endowed with reason—who has a soul, a worship, a religion—returns to his home weary and hungry, but well satisfied with his day: he has seen some tulips."

In the chapter *Sur quelques Usages*, he begins by ridiculing the successful efforts of *roturiers* to provide themselves with arms and an ancestry. He has known the crown transferred from the *bourgeois*' shop-sign to the panel of his coach. He notes the power that lurks in humanity to believe its own lies. A rustic, by dint of saying that he has seen a miracle, persuades himself that he has seen one. He who perseveres in concealing his age, ends by believing himself young. In the same way the *roturier* who habitually derives his origin from some ancient baron, from whom in truth he does not descend, has the pleasure at length of believing that he does. "I take this opportunity to declare," says our author—"that the world may be prepared, and nobody taken by surprise if it should happen that some great man takes me under his wing, or if I make a great fortune—that there is a Geoffrey de la Bruyère whom all the chronicles rank among the greatest *seigneurs* of France, who followed Godfrey de Bouillon to the Holy Land, from whom I descend in a direct line."

The same section has comments on the monstrous anomalies prevalent in the Church, and taken as a matter of course; on the strange inconsistencies of domestic life and marriage; on the abuses and tyrannies of the law,—which lead him to remark, "I might say pretty certainly of myself that I shall never be a thief or a murderer—but it is a bold word to say I shall never be punished as such"; on the vexed question of medicine, "Neither satire nor the theatre," he observes, "diminish the doctors' incomes. They marry their daughters, and place their sons in Parliament and the prelacy, and the laughers and satirists themselves furnish the money. The day arrives when the healthy become sick; they want people whose business it is to tell them they will not die. So long as men may die who want to live, the doctor will be laughed at and paid." In this section we find the strange character of *Hermippus*, the man who runs counter to custom in all his habits—one, we imagine, which will find response in every one's experience:—

"Hermippus is the slave of what he calls his little conveniences. To them he sacrifices received usage, custom, fashion, and politeness. He is always contriving for them, and changing a small improvement for what he thinks a greater. He neglects nothing in this line, but makes it his great study; not a day passes without some discovery. He leaves to other men the ceremonies of dinner and supper, and scarcely acknowledges such terms; for him, he eats when he is hungry, and only what he particularly fancies. He stands by while his bed is made; for where is the hand skilful and happy enough to enable him to sleep exactly as he likes to sleep? He rarely goes out, and prefers to all other places the room where he is neither idle nor industrious—where he does not act, but bustles and muddles all day long in his dressing-gown. Most people depend servilely

on the locksmith or the joiner, as they may need their services: but with Hermippus, if anything has to be filed, he has a file; to be sawn, he has a saw; if any nails have to be taken out, he has pincers at hand. You can't imagine the tool he has not got, and to his mind, much better and more convenient than those in common use. He has new and unknown ones of his own invention, for which he himself has almost forgotten the use. Nobody can compare with him in a facility for making useless things. At one time it took ten steps from his bed to his closet: it takes but nine since some changes he has made. How many steps saved in a lifetime! Elsewhere people must needs turn a key, push outward or draw towards them, and a door opens. What a trouble! He has contrived to spare one of these movements; but how? This is a mystery not to be revealed. He is, in truth, a great master of mechanical expedients in those things nobody else cares about. Hermippus lets the daylight into his room by other means than through the window; he has found the secret of getting up and down otherwise than by the stairs, and goes out and comes in much more conveniently than through the door."

We must not indulge ourselves in more characters at length. Gladly would we give *Gnathon*, the selfish man, in all his intercourse with his kind—at table, in church, and theatre, on the journey—who pities nobody, recognises no ills but his own, his repletion and his bile—who weeps for no other death, and only dreads his own, which he would gladly redeem by the extinction of the human race;—or *Cliton*, the glutton—who only seems born to digest—who has never been known to expose himself to the horrible misfortune of an ill-cooked ragout or an indifferent glass of wine. "But he exists no longer. He had himself carried to the table up to his last sigh, and gave a dinner the day he died. Wherever he is, he eats still; and, if he returns to this world, it

will be to eat again." A few sentences, taken at random, are all we have space for:—

"A bad man has it not in him to be a great man; admire if you will his views, his projects, his conduct—exaggerate his cleverness in finding the best and shortest means to his ends. If these ends are bad, prudence has no part in them; and where prudence is wanting, show me the greatness if you can."

"People do not fly with the same wings in search of fortune as for trifles and fancies. There is a sense of freedom in following your caprices, and, on the contrary, of servitude in pursuing your advancement. It is natural to long for it, and yet not to labour after it—to believe yourself worthy to find without the effort of search."

"Liberality consists less in giving much than in giving what is wanted (*à propos*)."

"There is pleasure in meeting the eyes of one on whom you are going to confer a benefit."

"We must laugh before we are happy, for fear of dying without laughing at all."

"Regretting those you love is happiness compared with living with those you hate."

"The Court is like an edifice built of marble. It is composed of men hard and polished."

"It is much less rare to meet with intellect than people who use what they have got, or who know how to apply that of others and put it to some use."

"It would seem, on first thoughts, that part of the pleasure of princes was to inconvenience other people; but no, Princes are like other men—they think of themselves, follow their taste, their passions, their conveniences. This is natural."

"People [against general invitations] invite, offer their houses, their table, their services; nothing costs anything (*ne coûte*) but keeping your word."

"Men do not begin to think of making their fortune till thirty—at fifty it is not made. They begin to build in their old age, and die at the point of painting and glazing."

"The pleasure of criticism deprives

us of the other pleasure of being keenly touched by beautiful things."

"To think only of yourself and of the present is one great source of error in politics."

"The flatterer has neither a sufficiently good opinion of himself nor of others."

"How do you amuse yourself? how do you pass your time? is the question alike of fools and men of intelligence. If I reply, I open my eyes and see, I open my ears and hear, I seek health, repose, liberty, it is saying nothing—it is no answer. Solid pleasures, great joys, the only real satisfactions of life, are not reckoned, do not make themselves felt. Do you play? do you mask? One must find an answer."

"The spirit of moderation, and a certain wisdom in conduct, leave men in obscurity; it needs great virtues to be known and admired, or perhaps great vices."

Would-be-wits, buffoons—*mauvais plaisants*—are objects of his particular disgust. Perhaps he suffered from them; but we find something of the same feeling in Pascal in the startling saying—"Disseur de bons mots, mauvais caractère."

"So thick upon the ground are buffoons," says our author, "that one treads on them. It rains this sort of insect in all countries. Real fun is a rare thing. To a man born with it, the gift needs delicate handling. It is not often that the man who makes us laugh wins our esteem."

The book closes with these reflections:—

"A certain inequality of condition, which shall keep up order and subordination, is the work of God, and implies a divine law. A too great disproportion, such as we observe among men in their work, is the law of the strongest."

"All extremes are vicious, and come from men. All compensation is just, and comes from God."

"If people don't relish these characters, I am surprised; if they do relish them, I am surprised all the same."

La Bruyère was emphatically a believer—holding a sense of a God

to be innate—an obedient son of the Church, accepting all its teaching, but tempering the national conformity, and by implication his own, by the observation that each man selected for himself an inner creed, according to his particular bent, from the great body of dogmatic formula. His criticisms and strictures are confined to the practical religion of the day, to modern abuses and developments, to ecclesiastical fopperies and worldliness, with intimations of further and darker departures from the spirit of the Gospel. But this world occupied his own mind and intellect; and he wrote for men of the world, with the honest intention of showing them the way to live wisely and well in it. It was not man in his domestic and more private relations, but man in society, who employed and filled his thoughts; not, of course, stopping there—his penetration reached beyond the scene of his scrutiny; but he does not follow men home. It is as they show themselves to the world that he paints them, convicting them of meanness, pride, arrogance, self-seeking, and all the train of vices fostered by luxury, idleness, and vanity, in their intercourse with one another.

All his art, all the graces of his style, go to set forth the attractiveness as well as virtue of honesty, simplicity, truth, and independence. He sees the ugliness of vice and selfishness, under whatever disguise, and makes us see it too. *Les Caractères* is one of the books from which the reader ought to rise a wiser man. And he will scarcely rise a sadder one; for the humours, the inconsistencies, the harmless peculiarities of men furnished so much matter, and are hit off with a truth so keen, a wit of felicitous expression so rare, that these qualities seem to transfer themselves to his own mind, illuminating it with a sudden sense of insight and percep-

tion. As a friend of bright intelligence (introduced to the book for the first time) wrote, after a delighted glance through its pages: "Thank you for introducing us to La Bruyère. Most excellent I think he is—so true, so simple, so natural. Exactly what I should have said myself."

Those of our readers who are familiar with this classic are likely to reproach us, under the disappointing unsatisfactory veil of translation, with not having chosen our extracts

well. They will certainly miss many of their most favourite thoughts and characters; but the work is so varied, runs through so wide a range of subjects, all treated with the same happy conscientiousness, the same mind busy upon them, that it is impossible to convey any adequate idea in a few pages. We shall be satisfied if, by what we have said and quoted, we tempt those who have only hitherto known La Bruyère as a name, to procure his 'Characters' in the original and read for themselves.

THE END OF THE BANQUET.

FAREWELL, my friends!—I hear the call
I cannot but obey;—
Farewell! for I must leave you all,
Had I the wish to stay.

And yet—forgive me—I rejoice,
For I am old and tired;—
Worn by the talk, the lights, the noise,
And all I once desired.

After a time life's very best
Begins to stale and pall:
I go to silence and to rest,
And so—Farewell to all!

W. W. S.

OUR AUTUMN MANŒUVRES.

WE have now finished our second attempt to afford the army some practical instruction in the art of campaigning, and in the higher science of war, by the manœuvring of one force against another. Has it been successful? have we judiciously expended the money voted for it by Parliament? Are the answers to these questions such as to warrant our repeating the experiment next year? A few pages may be profitably allotted to the consideration of these points.

It is not necessary to disprove the commission of numerous blunders on the part of both executive and administrative officers in order that we should be able to pronounce our second attempt a success; for one of the great objects to be attained was to discover our weak points, to find out what was amiss, and where there was friction in the working of our military machine. But if, after having incurred the expense, these faults thus ascertained are not corrected, not only shall we have wasted our money, but our military rulers will have proved themselves culpably negligent of the public interests.

There is no desire on the part of generals or staff officers to hide defects; they are only too anxious to bring them forward with a view to their being corrected. Many in our army dislike changes because they are changes, so that military reformers can only hope to succeed by enlisting the public opinion on their side. The volunteer movement has directed attention so generally to military subjects, that the public is now fully competent to form sound opinions upon army questions that are argued out fully and fairly in the current literature of the day.

The following remarks are written in no captious spirit; the writer has no pet hobby to advocate. His object is to let John Bull know frankly the opinion of a large class of military men as to the shortcomings of our army, when viewed as a machine for the purposes for which all armies exist. It is believed that the following views upon the purely military part of the subject are regarded by some old generals as akin to revolutionary. These views are not, however, very new; and their great claim to consideration is, that they are not original, being shared by the thinking men in every well-instructed foreign army, and by the great bulk of our rising officers. If the following conclusions are concurred in, it is for the reader to appraise the amount of blame—rather let us say of criminality—to be attached to rulers who do not change those tactics that have become obsolete, and to an administrative machinery that has proved so unsuited for the exigencies of war that, when recently tested by the French, it became the primary cause of their disasters.

In attempting to answer the questions with which we have begun this article, it will be well to divide the subject into two heads: 1st, The fitness of our executive system to the requirements of modern war, as well as the manner in which that system has been carried out; 2d, The fitness of our administrative system for the purpose of feeding and of otherwise supplying the wants of our army during war.

The men who have to win our battles may be the bravest and most highly instructed of soldiers; but unless a machinery exists by means of which they shall be kept, when

in the field, well fed, clothed, paid, and supplied with ammunition, &c., the army had better not exist at all, as far as the nation is concerned.

The subject really resolves itself into combatant and non-combatant considerations. It must never be forgotten that the non-combatant class attached to the army exists solely for the service of combatants; it is not of the army but *for* the army. This would seem to be frequently forgotten by right honourable gentlemen in framing administrative regulations, and by those who have to carry them out. The attention of all military organisers should be steadily fixed upon our sabres and bayonets, remembering that victory depends upon their efficiency: their interests must be considered first.

In sending an army into the field, one of the most important functions of a War Minister is the selection of division and brigade commanders to be employed. Judging from the selections made for our operations of both years, a stranger would be led to think that England was not rich in talented generals. Is it considered that the possession of a general's commission carries with it the gifts of ability and fitness for command? With a few brilliant exceptions, it will be generally admitted that the great majority of generals and brigadiers employed this year were not men to whose care the lives of soldiers could be intrusted in war. The troops engaged know this well. Why, therefore, should there be any squeamishness in letting the public know it also? But few possessed any qualifications for command beyond long service and their position in the army list. What a recent writer said of the French generals during the late war, may with truth be said of the large majority of those employed during both years'

manœuvres: "Par une étrange anomalie, il n'existait aucune corrélation entre le grade et la science, mais seulement entre l'âge et le grade." With us it is not those who are known to be the best men that are selected for commands, but those who possess what is termed "the best claims." The vested interests of officers have still great weight at the Horse Guards; and as long as it is considered that all vacant positions of importance must be given to the seniors, so long shall we suffer as an army and as a nation. Nine times out of ten the most important appointments are bestowed upon men as a reward for long, and perhaps meritorious, service.

Until the country is prepared to come forward and provide for its old generals, by giving them good life-pensions, we cannot hope to see their services dispensed with, nor military commands bestowed upon the best men for them.

It is most desirable that the youngest possible officers should be employed during our manœuvres in all high positions; at all events, the divisions should be organised as regards their generals, brigadiers, and staff, as they would embark in the event of its becoming necessary to send an army to Belgium. Surely no one with any pretence to a knowledge of war, or of the merits and reputation of the officers in our army, would contend that any War Minister would suffer our troops to leave England for real warfare under such generals as have recently been employed, there being, as already stated, some brilliant exceptions. Why, therefore, employ them during the manœuvres? The majority were incapable of affording instruction to others from their ignorance of the science of their profession, and they were beyond the age, and mostly too wedded to old ideas to learn themselves. New military

ideas assimilate as badly with the brains of our generals and older officers as does a patch of new cloth with an old garment.

Those who now hold the rank of general in our army, entered it when the reputation of being a good officer was easily obtained. Few of them have ever studied their profession scientifically; and those who have had war experience have gained it when the tactical requirements of the present day were undreamt of. They have grown old in the practice of what is now an obsolete system, and their scientific attainments are not of an order enabling them to rise to the increasing military requirements of the day, rendered necessary by the application of modern inventions to war purposes. The standard of military efficiency that is now essential for the well-being of an army is not recognised by them; they wrap themselves in the illusory, but to them comforting reflection, that the tactical system that was good enough for Wellington, is good enough for them, forgetting the improvements effected in arms since the great Duke's days, and ignoring the altered conditions of fighting they have given rise to.

Before dismissing this subject, let us remind the reader that we are now working slowly and against great opposition towards the establishment of a high standard of military knowledge for all the junior ranks in the army, but we are doing nothing to insure our lieutenant-colonels, colonels, and generals possessing any knowledge of strategy, tactics, or the science of their profession as applicable to those grades. In our junior ranks and in the grades of field officer, we have a large number of highly-instructed soldiers who are devoted to the acquisition of military knowledge. Many of these are on half-pay, and likely to be unemployed until, in

the course of nature, they have become sufficiently old and infirm to reach the grade of general, when, owing to rheumatism and disappointed hopes, they also may perhaps be little fitted for the command of men in war. In the mean time they must be content to rust in idleness, seeing appointment after appointment given away to men ignorant of their profession as a science, but possessed of what is termed by the authorities "good claims for employment."

Our rulers fail to appreciate how essential it is that military knowledge should keep pace *pari passu* with the increased responsibility attached to each step of military rank. Until we insist that all officers commanding regiments, all colonels and generals, shall possess a high scientific knowledge of their business, we shall see displayed at every succeeding autumnal manœuvres that same professional ignorance, and inability to understand the tactical requirements of modern war, that characterised the movements and dispositions made during the last two autumns by the majority of the generals and brigadiers employed.

Running through our whole military hierarchy, there is, on the part of officers, a curious want of confidence in those holding the grade immediately below them. The general commanding a division has no reliance upon the ability of his brigadiers, nor the brigadier upon that of the officers commanding corps, nor they in their turn upon their captains. This is very injurious to efficiency; and the result is, that we find generals amongst the skirmishers, interfering with colonels and captains, to the general confusion of every one. If we would all content ourselves with performing the duties pertaining to our grades and functions, things would

go on much smoother; but when we interfere with juniors in the performance of their ordinary duties or their movements in the field, in the amiable hope that we are helping a dull or stupid officer, we puzzle him all the more. If left to himself, he might not be brilliant certainly, but he would do much better, and have a chance of learning to do still better in the future. This fussiness and desire to interfere is the proverbial failing of our commanding officers; and during any field-day it is no uncommon occurrence to see generals of high rank taking command of regiments, and even of companies, to the great detriment of the service generally. This fault has been most glaring during both years' manœuvres.

Without attempting to introduce competitive examinations into our army, let us trust that, in accordance with the spirit of the age, and in order that our army may keep pace with that of other nations, some system may be devised for insuring to the country and to the soldiers to be commanded, that our superior officers are possessed of the military knowledge now required by those holding high military positions. We hope the day is near when appointments will no longer be given as heretofore, but will be bestowed upon men whose talents and professional attainments warrant their being intrusted with the command of soldiers under fire.

It is hoped that the reader has read the Wellington prize essay of this year. The tactical proficiency now required by an army is fully described, and the important study of how battles will be fought henceforth is well argued out in it. Those views accord with the opinion of the best foreign military writers of the day, and, as far as general principles are concerned, may therefore be accepted unhesitatingly. Many

may differ upon points of detail, but all are agreed in condemning our present formations as unsuited for fighting purposes. The public has of late heard so much about the "Scientific Corps" (the officers of which do not hide their light under a bushel), that we are in danger of forgetting the most important arm of the service—the infantry. So much has recently been written about the importance of artillery, of the crushing effects of the Prussian guns at Sedan, that an impression seems to have taken hold of the non-professional public, that to be strong in artillery, without regard to the efficiency of your infantry, means being strong on the day of battle. This alleged increased importance of artillery is a myth. The subject is too large for this article; but let the practical-minded English man remember, according to the returns recently published by the Prussians, that out of every hundred wounds, over ninety had been made by the rifled musket. The overwhelming victories won by the Prussians in 1866 and 1870 were not due to any superiority in artillery: it is an admitted fact that King William's guns in Bohemia were badly handled tactically, and played a minor part throughout the whole campaign. Their success has from first to last been attributable to the superior efficiency of their infantry; and no one truth comes out more strongly from the recent experience of war, than that, with equal numbers, the side whose infantry is best will surely win. A French marshal once said that ours "was the finest infantry in the world; but that, thank heaven, there was not much of it." If applied to war under the conditions upon which battles were fought when this was said, the same might with still greater truth be said of it now, for we have gone on perfecting it to

fit it for those conditions. Breech-loading and rifled arms have altered those conditions, but we still go on preparing for a species of war that never can be repeated.

An army cannot stand still as regards its efficiency, and its value as a fighting instrument. To be efficient it must march with the times. There are few mechanical inventions or scientific discoveries having any practical bearing upon social progress that fail to react more or less directly upon the art of war. The great military successes of the world have been gained by men who, as if by inspiration, having availed themselves of the science and inventions of their age to provide their troops with the best arms, were able, through their genius, to perceive the system of tactics most suited to develop their use. Having thus brought their forces into a condition of fitness for war unattained, perhaps unappreciated, by their neighbours, they won victory after victory over these, who, easy-going people—like us at present—had let their armies fall asleep in pleasant but fatal ignorance of their inefficiency.

Our old officers, who still pin their faith to the tactics of Wellington, forget that his victories were due to his thorough appreciation of the requirements of war in the age in which he fought. His line-formation in two deep was the inspiration of a military genius of the highest order; and when his tactics, based thereon, were practised in the field against the column-formation of the previous era, the result was a series of victories that placed our army on the highest pinnacle of military renown. In fact, he won because his tactical conceptions were as far in advance of his contemporaries as they now are behind those practised recently by the Prussians. The Prussians have

been successful from having appreciated that the tactics of Wellington were no longer applicable to war when made with the present arms of precision, and from having adopted a system of attack in loose order to counteract their murderous effects. As Wellington won great victories by being ahead of his rivals in appreciating the tactical requirements of his time, it may with certainty be assumed that were he now living in all the vigour of his youthful mind, he would at once forsake the old theories, and strike out for us a system of tactics in consonance with the military necessities of the day.

Soldiers with a knowledge of their profession, as taught by recent wars, felt sad as they witnessed the engagements near Salisbury, where the slow, rigid formations of an obsolete system of tactics were practised under the approving eyes of so many of our generals. Since then the army has been anxiously expecting to receive official instructions directing attacks in skirmishing order to be tried, so that we may be spared in future having to drill our men upon false principles, and to inculcate erroneous ideas as to what actual fighting is like, and how it is best to be carried out.

The other arms of the service may be as fine as possible, and the *physique* of our men may leave us nothing to desire; but as it is infantry alone who can win battles, it is dreadful to think that if dragged into war to-morrow, our national honour—ay, even our fate as a nation—would have to depend upon an infantry instructed in the art of fighting as practised in an age that is no more,—upon an infantry whose proficiency in unpliable and ponderous movements would only enable it to die in a disciplined manner. Individuals learnt a great deal by the manœuvres of 1871, and the

rigidity and slowness of our movements was then fully appreciated by most men. Notwithstanding, however, we have again this year seen brigades deployed for attack into stiff lines, where each man felt the trouser-seams of his comrade to his right and his left. If the object was to give us a fair idea of what war was when both sides were armed with smooth-bores, the battles on the Wily were good; but if the British tax-payer imagines that they afforded the army any instruction in the art of fighting nowadays, he is very much mistaken. The soldier-angels must have wept with grief as they looked down and saw our magnificent Guardsmen slowly advancing up bare hills to attack lines dressed with a regularity that would have gladdened the heart of Frederick the Great's most zealous sergeant-major. Had the game been in earnest, we know that our Guards would never have surrendered, but they would most certainly have died *en masse*.

"The general idea," or outline for the operations on the plains of Salisbury, has recently been published in one of the newspapers. It had previously been made known only to the two opposing leaders. What the reason was for keeping it secret we know not; for in order that a proper interest should be taken in the operations by all engaged, it is very essential that even the rank and file should be told as much as possible regarding the object aimed at, and the movements intended to accomplish it.

The Northern Commander assumed throughout the campaign a strict, passively-defensive rôle, scattering his troops over an extent of country that could not have been defended by an army six times his strength. He was consequently weak everywhere, affording his opponent daily opportunities for that brilliant offensive which he adopted from the

first, and which, if the opinion formed of him at the Cape be true, is so much in consonance with his active, fiery disposition.

The general idea was a very good one, and was calculated to afford instructive lessons to all thinking officers in its execution. Why the programme laid down for the third day's fighting was altered has never been satisfactorily explained: the thread of the operations was broken by introducing into them a badly-designed Wimbledon field-day. Camp rumour assigned the well-known good-nature of the Duke as a reason, it being said that he was anxious if possible to force the Northern side into a victory by ordering it to assume the offensive. Some said it was to be accounted for by the irrepressible love on the part of the public for sham fights executed on restricted spaces. Every one can certainly see well upon such occasions, but no one learns anything. The result of the third day's fighting was as unfortunate to the Northern side as that of the two preceding engagements, and its commander proved himself to be as unhappy in this, his only attempt at an offensive operation, as he was throughout in his defensive combinations.

For Control purposes, it is, we are told, absolutely necessary that the officers of that department should know beforehand where the troops are to encamp each evening. In order to secure their being at the places decided upon, it is necessary to have upon the theatre of war in the rear or on the flanks of the opposing armies, imaginary forces that can be brought up at any phase of an action, for the purpose of counteracting any great success won by either side in advance of the position previously selected for Control purposes as its camp for the night. It is only by means of such imaginary forces that the require-

ments of the Control Department can be satisfied without in any way fettering the freedom of commanders, and arranging beforehand which side is to be successful in each action. The first day's fighting on the river Wily is a good example. Both generals had the most unlimited freedom of action. Sir R. Walpole took up a defensive position behind the river, with a view to preventing the invaders from crossing it. He failed signally, as all generals have done in real war who have attempted a similar feat by remaining strictly on the defensive. Sir John Michel carried half of his force across at an unguarded point, with which he pounced down upon the flank of the enemy at Codford, whilst the other half assailed him in front. There being only a small part of the Northern army at that point, and as the remaining brigades were too distant to render timely assistance, the result of the day's fighting was pronounced to be a Southern victory. But the Control, or rather the contractors who sail under the Control colours, had provided for feeding the invading army some miles south of the river from Codford. Sir John Michel ought to have been beaten, as he would have been had his opponent been a real general; but he had won, and to prevent the arrangements of the firm of Control, Contractors, & Co. from collapsing, it was essential that the invaders should retire from the position they had won. What was to be done? Unexpected as the result was, it had been provided for beforehand, by having an imaginary force marching from the west through Warminster to the defenders' assistance. It was at once announced that these reinforcements were advancing upon Sir John Michel's flank; so he had nothing for it but to fall back behind the river, giving up the advantage he had gained.

By this plan two opposing forces

can be really moved about a country by a skilful player as pieces are on a chess-board, without in any way whatever restricting the commander's liberty of action as regards the combinations of any one day's operations.

Much has recently been written in the daily press condemnatory of these "paper armies;" but if the reporters who deprecated their use so strongly had to arrange for the operations of two hostile armies on a restricted area, so as to secure that they shall come into collision at least four times without interfering with the contractor's arrangements for feeding them, "our specials" would find it impossible, without the assistance of imaginary forces, to give to the operations the cohesive resemblance of a real campaign.

It is to be regretted beyond measure that the result of each day's operations was not published every evening, comments being made at the same time by the Commander-in-Chief upon the mistakes committed, and upon all movements or combinations that seemed to be worthy of favourable notice. It is difficult to do this when the troops march every day; but if they only did so every alternate day, it might be easily effected. It is believed that if this was done, the manœuvres might be made most interesting to even the rank and file engaged: the soldier would understand the game he was helping to play, and would take a pleasure in it. No nation is so fond of outdoor amusements, and of everything approaching to sport, as we are; and all who watched our men when the opposing sides had now and then approached one another too closely, must have remarked how strongly the schoolboy instincts came out in the man; indeed, upon these occasions it was only by the efforts of the officers on both sides that the tussles of a football-match were prevented.

Explain every day to all ranks exactly what has been done, and what the position of the game is, and what are to be the conditions for the next fight, and we feel sure that our men will become as interested in it as in their cricket—in fact, that the game of war, as practised during the manœuvres, would soon be reckoned amongst their athletic sports.

It is also thought that by halting a day between each fight the opposing sides would have admirable opportunities for practising outpost duty in presence of one another. As the manœuvres have been carried on hitherto, our soldiers have not had sufficient opportunities for practising the operations of what is known as "little war." Our commanders and their staff learn a great deal in the larger combinations, but regimental officers can only be taught the functions of war belonging to their grades by our working the outposts of one army against those of the other. It is not necessary to keep the men out at night; but certain hours being fixed, say from 6 A.M. until 6 or 7 P.M., each army should during that time be covered with outposts, to be conducted in every respect as if on active service, reconnaissances on a small scale being made at will by both sides. A large extent of country should be covered as if each force to be protected was an army of, say 50,000 men. The ordinary plan hitherto followed for affording instruction in these most important duties has been by sending out a brigade or division to take up a line of outposts in a certain named direction, having only an imaginary enemy in front. But little is learnt thus, as it is necessary to have an enemy in the flesh, to let all see what they could and could not do under similar circumstances in real war.

The number of umpires employed was not sufficient: to each brigade

one should be attached daily, to remain throughout the day's operations at the brigadier's side. During both autumnal manœuvres an umpire, like the typical policeman, was never to be found when wanted. The duties of an umpire are very difficult; and upon the manner in which they are performed everything depends when one force is to operate against another. Artillery-fire is the greatest element of difficulty in their work, as with guns firing at long ranges it is impossible to discern from a distance what they are directed upon. To estimate their imaginary effect upon troops is never an easy matter; but when they are themselves being hammered by hostile batteries the calculation becomes still more perplexing. The tendency throughout has been to over-estimate their effect. The effect of a well-directed artillery-fire upon dense masses of troops at 2500 yards, or upon lines and battalion columns at 1500 yards, is most serious; but upon skirmishers, upon small company columns on the move, or upon cavalry at the trot over undulating ground, it is very slight indeed.

All who studied the positions taken up, and the manner in which they were attacked, must have remarked that open ground destitute of cover was avoided by the assailants. We have all learnt from our fights near the Wily that the parts of a position in front of which no cover exists, and which can be swept by both infantry and artillery fire, are with our present arms impregnable. Formerly, the strongest portions of a position were those where the country being close, the hedges, ditches, trees, &c., provided cover, enabling you to dispute the ground inch by inch: such ground will still enable you to make an assailant pay dearly for the possession of every field. It has not lost its actual, but its relative strength—it is as formidable as ever;

but from the fact of an assailant being unable to move over the open parts of a position, he is forced to attack now where formerly the existence of those natural parapets and obstacles would have deterred him from attempting. Formerly, this strong ground was only weakly occupied, whilst the bulk of the defender's force was massed to await the enemy's attack over the open country, where all arms could manœuvre freely. Positions will henceforth be occupied in just the opposite way. The open ground will be held by a small force, whilst the serious work will be expected in those places where undulations of the ground, woods, &c. &c., would enable the assailants to approach the position without being too seriously exposed to fire.

The county militia from each of the three kingdoms showed to advantage this year, being in every respect vastly superior to the metropolitan battalions employed last autumn. The weak point with all our reserve forces is their officers. Few of them possess that faculty for command which the bulk of our officers in the army acquire after a few years' service almost without knowing it. It is difficult to describe it, and it is impossible to acquire it from the study of books, although to some it comes by intuition. Apart from this most important qualification, the militia and volunteer officer possesses none of that special and scientific knowledge of his profession to which so much importance is now so justly attached in armies. As long as these sham reserves are maintained, it is difficult to see how this their fundamental weakness can be obviated. Non-military men were surprised to see such a long line of stragglers behind each militia regiment, not being aware that marching, equipped as a soldier, is an art that practice only can impart. The country

labourer who spends his days on his legs in the fields, and who walks daily some distance to and from his work, marches at first very little better than the city recruit. During the manœuvres, the marching of the best county militia corps was far below that of the worst regiment in the army that had been recruited chiefly in a manufacturing district. Of the Irish militia, the stories that floated about camp of amusing incidents occurring in the ranks of a certain battalion made one think of Charles O'Malley, and regret that we had now no Lever to make us laugh at the droll wit of his Irish soldiers. The following anecdote might have emanated from Mr. Mickey Free. During a change of front in one of the day's operations, a staff officer, seeing a company of their regiment straying from the right direction, galloped up, calling out, "Go fours right, sir!" Seeing that no notice was taken of his order, he said to a sergeant who happened to be beside his horse, "Why doesn't your captain give the word, 'fours right'?" The instant reply was, "Plaze sur, he isn't on spaking terms with his men."

There is a feature peculiar to manœuvres that must ever distinguish them from real war—it is the rapidity with which ground is got over in action. There is no death staring the eager soldier in the face to cool his impetuosity: the silencing effects of appalling horror that has struck the bravest heart as comrades to the right and left fall beside you groaning masses of mutilated humanity, horrible even to remember in after-years, has no existence in a sham fight. The assailants of the strongest positions push on regardless of the imaginary hail of bullets around them. This will always give the attacking side the advantage in mimic war, and the only way in which it can be coun-

teracted is by the umpires halting the assailants constantly, so as to delay them in advancing about as long as they consider the strength of the defence would have done if the rifles carried bullets. If this were intelligently done, the defensive side would, as in actual war, be able to bring up reinforcements to the point attacked. This disregard of fire was displayed throughout all the recent fights, but most glaringly so during the last day's operations, when one of Sir R. Walpole's divisions hurried on, regardless of a cross-fire upon it, to attack the brigade covering the passage of the Avon by the Southern force in its advance towards London.

The manner in which our cavalry was handled this year, and the superior knowledge of their work evinced by all ranks in it, proves that last year's manœuvres were not in vain. The lessons then learnt have borne fruit; and when brigades under Colonels Marshall or Baker shook themselves free from the thralldom entailed upon them by their cautious commanders of the barrack-yard school, no cavalry in the world could have shown to greater advantage. There can be little doubt that Sir John Michel owed much to his cavalry for the manner in which he was kept constantly informed of his opponent's movements and whereabouts, and for the way in which his own doings were screened from hostile observation. One cavalry regiment went through the campaign without horse-blankets, and none turned out stronger at the march past or with horses in better condition. As far as instruction is concerned, our cavalry has only to go on in its present course of teaching the officers and non-commissioned officers the multitudinous duties that would fall to their lot in war, to make it all that can be desired; but it is necessary that our best cavalry men

should now turn their attention to their equipment. The weight carried by the horse is excessive; every dragoon carries a portmanteau of clothes behind him, and his saddle, bridle, and accoutrements are cumbrous and heavy. Listen to the noise of a hussar as he trots along a road, and one would think that he had a lot of chains and tin kettles dragging to his horse's tail.

Artillery learn less than the other arms by these manœuvres: its power being in its fire alone, it is unable to estimate its effects when blank ammunition only is used. As already remarked, owing to the long ranges at which guns now open, it is difficult to impress upon the distant troops that they are the targets aimed at. The only arm of the service that can never get "out of hand" in an action now is the artillery. It was essential that its movements should be no longer tied to those of the infantry; but there is a good deal of nonsense talked about the necessity for giving it "greater independence and freedom of action." As guns will now be moved very little after they have once opened fire, and as their position must henceforth be to the rear of the infantry, they will be more than ever, and more than the other arms, under the immediate orders and at the disposition of the general commanding throughout an action. Our artillery is as perfect as it can be; but maintaining during peace the large number of horses per battery that we do, is a reckless waste of money, that might be employed in keeping up more gunners. Fifty horses per battery would be ample for all purposes during peace.

It is not easy to find work for any large number of engineers at these manœuvres, for we cannot loophole walls, make abatis of woods, or improve the picturesque appearance of country houses and villages by placing them in a state of defence. The destruction and repair of bridges

can only be imaginary; and in England it is difficult to include unfordable rivers in the theatre of operations, so as to afford practice in pontooning, and in the construction of trestle or improvised bridges. During the last two days' fighting on the lower Wily and on the Avon, pontoon-bridges were thrown over those rivers most admirably and very quickly. The new pontoon equipment fulfilled the purposes for which it is required to the satisfaction of all; and it may, we think, be said with truth, that we are certainly ahead of all other armies in the pontoons now used in our service. Last year a defensive position was strengthened by field-works at Chobham that gave the engineers plenty to do: this year, the plan of campaign adopted did not admit of repeating this practice; and besides, the ground was badly suited for hastily-constructed field-works, the soil being generally little more than six inches in depth, below it lying the hard chalk.

The tools allotted to each battalion for intrenching purposes were distributed throughout the baggage-waggons this year, in order to economise transport; the construction of rifle-pits or shelter-trenches was therefore, as a rule, out of the question. Last year these tools were carried in a cart allowed to each regiment for the purpose, and, following immediately in its rear, were always available for use.

The engineers of old who laid out Yarnbury Castle and Old Sarum, must have had a thorough knowledge of their profession. If they were as skilful in attack as in their defensive works, the engineer's science must have been well taught in those ages long past. As these and others of their fortifications in the neighbourhood were the admiration of all, so they were also a puzzle to the ablest, as to where they got

water for the large numbers that must have been required to defend works of such magnitude. The water-supply for all our camps was admirably arranged by our engineers; in one instance, the water was forced up a considerable height over half a mile's distance by means of a little traction-engine, that has now been regularly introduced into our service for field use. It can draw great loads up steep hills, is not too heavy to go over bridges constructed of our pontoons, and can be used as a stationary engine to pump water, cut timber, &c. &c.

The use of the field-telegraph was still further developed this year than last autumn. The equipment for it is all that can be desired, and the manner in which it was worked throughout was most creditable to all concerned.

When anything peculiar or out of the ordinary routine has to be done, the first idea occurring to every one is, "send for the engineers:" no matter what it may be that is required, no difficulty is ever made by them—the work is done, and done well. When at Chatham or any other station, the repair of all material is done by the Control Department; or rather, if it is a telegraphic implement, it is sent to a London instrument-maker—if a waggon, it is sent to the carriage department at Woolwich. The controllers pay the bills for the work done; but as regards all scientific or warlike stores, they cannot be expected to know whether it is well or badly done. Having within the corps no establishments prepared to meet such wants, their only resource is the Arsenal at Woolwich, and failing that a London firm. This expensive routine is clung to most tenaciously by Control officers at stations, but in the field the practice is abandoned; and dur-

ing the recent manœuvres not only did the engineers look after their own equipment, but at the request of the controllers they actually repaired the Control waggons as they broke down from time to time, thus giving one more proof of how unsuited the Control system and Department is for the rough work of actual service.

Space prevents us from enlarging further upon combatant subjects. Let us briefly sum up, therefore, the advantages afforded to the fighting troops by these manœuvres:—

1st, We have had the soldier-like qualities and ability of a few proved as clearly as the incapacity of the majority of the generals employed has been made patent to all.

2d, We have been able to corroborate in our sham fights the views proclaimed by the ablest soldiers after the war experience of 1866 and 1870—viz., that to fight in the tactical formations of the last generation, as laid down in our drill-books, is to insure destruction in the day of battle.

3d, Our staff officers have had admirable practice in moving troops, and in the numerous duties devolving upon the staff in war, upon the able performance of which success must ever depend.

4th, All officers who were anxious to learn the practical work of their profession have done so, the amount being, it is believed, in all instances proportional with their desire for knowledge.

5th, About 80,000 men, shaking themselves clear of barrack life, became a mobilised little army, complete in its regimental transport, and, after the first few days' experience, fit to have taken the field as far as its capacity to move together as an armed force was concerned. Every one employed acquired practice in the duties involved in the by no means easy work of collecting together individual battalions, regi-

ments, and batteries from their stations scattered over Great Britain and Ireland, and organising them into brigades and divisions. In Prussia, where everything is local—where the same regiments always form the same brigade, the same brigades always the same division, and so on—the operation is simple enough: every one knows his own place, and knows the men who have to fill the various positions as commanders, as staff officers, and as administrative functionaries. With us it is the reverse; we are and always must be scratch packs swept together from all directions, with huntsmen knowing nothing of their horses, their hounds, or their whips. This is the work that would fall upon us in case of war, and it is most desirable that our officers should have practice at it. That practice is beneficial is evidenced by the improved manner in which this duty has been performed recently over our first attempt last autumn.

In fine, it is impossible to estimate in money, or even to describe fully in words, the advantages accruing to the combatants of our army from these manœuvres.

The non-combatants in our army are the chaplains, the doctors, the veterinary surgeons, and the officers of the Control Department. The last named is the only one of these departments regarding which it is now intended to say a little. In doing so, we feel how impossible it is to avoid wounding the susceptibilities of men who are the most susceptible of any attached to our army. As our sole object is to let John Bull know what he gets for his money, we must only ask their pardon and proceed to our task.

It is with the system, not with the officers who carry it out, that we find fault. In the Department there are many able men, and all employed during these manœuvres

worked zealously and with the best intentions.

It may be assumed that few of our readers have waded through the very able but voluminous report of Lord Strathnairn's committee, the result of which was the present Control Department. Although it may officially claim such a parentage, there can be no doubt that as an infant it was changed at nurse, and bears no resemblance whatever to the reputed authority for its existence. The summing up of the committee may be described in a few words to be a recommendation to concentrate all the transport of the army under one department, and to divide the charge of stores into two departments—one to have the custody of the warlike, the other of what is generally known as provision for both man and beast. To prove how widely these recommendations have been departed from, it is enough to say that the transport of all regimental stores—such as baggage, tents, cooking utensils, intrenching tools, and the 1st reserve of small-arm ammunition—was carried out regimentally during the recent manœuvres, whilst the staff baggage and reserves were carried by the Control; and that all stores, the *munitions de bouche* and the *munitions de guerre*, were united under the custody of one department—viz., the Control. In fact, not only have the committee's recommendations been departed from, but they have been reversed, and the very opposite course has been pursued.

Stories without end, that would be amusing if they were not told of public duties badly performed, might be repeated of commissaries who had been all their lives issuing pork and biscuit being suddenly called upon to take charge of, and to issue, as requested, such complicated material as percussion fuses, galvanic batteries, electrical apparatus, &c.; or of men who, having been educated

as purveyors to the care of hospital stores and utensils, finding themselves responsible for the purchase of hay and oats for the cavalry. These facts might be related *ad nauseam*; but as our business is more with the system than with the manner in which it is worked, we shall pass on to consider the fundamental imperfections in the Control—imperfections so great that it would be impossible for an army to make war successfully whilst it had to depend for food, clothes, and stores of all sorts, upon it.

The Control system is based upon the dogma that all officers belonging to the Department are men of vast knowledge and information ranging over all subjects, so that the officer who is to-day in charge of the slaughter-yard, with his attendant train of butchers, may to-morrow be in charge of intricately-constructed warlike stores—that every man is equally well fitted for all commissariat and store duties. According to the Control regulations, if a corps receives bad bread or beef, it is obliged to complain to the man who issued it, who generally pooh-poohs the complaint; or, if he does send it on to higher authority, sends it forward with his own version of the story, so that by the time it reaches the general, it has received such a Control gloss, that it is frequently dismissed as frivolous. Now it is essential to protect the soldier from his butchers and his bakers, as he has no voice in selecting them. Armies have more than once been ruined by its commissaries; and there have been many instances in war where, whilst the soldier was nigh starving upon bad and insufficient rations, the commissary grew rich: the country paid largely all this time for this disastrous condition of affairs. It is all very well to say that the Control officers are under the general, but the general cannot be everywhere; nor is it possible for

the most highly gifted of soldiers to command an army or even a division in the field with success if his mind is to be upon all sorts of occasions distracted by inquiring into complaints as to the mustiness of oats or the quality of salt pork. He can only exercise a control over details by means of a body of efficient staff officers, who, having no status apart from him, and being as it were a portion of himself, supplementing his powers of eyesight and of hearing, and developing the inspirations of his brain, putting them into shape by painting in backgrounds and details to the outlines he sketches for them, are enabled to represent him in all disputes between departments, and in all complaints made by the soldiers of those employed to purvey to their wants. These staff officers have the welfare of no special department at heart; they are soldiers themselves, and know a soldier's wants, understand his prejudices, and are thoroughly acquainted with what is and what is not necessary for his comfort and wellbeing. On the other hand, those who have to provide and issue the food and stores required by troops during war, whether you call them commissaries, controllers, purveyors, or by any other name yet to be invented in the shady side of Pall Mall, belong to a department in which they hope to rise; and that is to them what the regiment is to the combatant soldier: its welfare and its reputation occupies the first place in their thoughts, and its interests are considered first. Fault is not found with them on this account—it is but human nature that they should do so; but fault is found with those who have, by framing the existing Control regulations, deprived our soldiers of the protection formerly secured to them by the supervision over the administrative departments formerly exer-

cised by the staff of the army. We know positively that during the recent manœuvres there were irregularities in the hours of issue, and in the quality of the articles issued, that were never reported to the generals. The Control Department is fast getting beyond all control; it has thrown aside the check that was formerly exercised over commissariat expenditure by the Treasury, as it now audits its own accounts, and, in breaking free from all staff supervision, its officers can do as they please. They acknowledge a nominal allegiance to the general commanding, but their real chief sits in the War Office, to whom all their reports are addressed, from whom alone they expect promotion and reward, and to whom they write privately upon all subjects. The general, who is responsible for the successful working of the whole machine committed to his care, may write whatever he desires to the Commander-in-Chief; but if he wants to communicate with the War Department, he has to do it through his controller, who may, in forwarding it, give any opinion he wishes, officially pooh poohing, if he likes, the views expressed by the general commanding on the spot. The Control officials at the War Office, to whom this correspondence is addressed, belonging to the interested Department, imbued with its ideas and instincts, having the desire for its reputation and interests uppermost in their thoughts, naturally take the views of their own officer in preference to those of the general. This is the most complete example of an *imperium in imperio* that it is possible to exhibit. General officers are forced to submit to this during peace, or resign their employment; but surely even the controller most ignorant of war cannot believe it possible that any commander of reputation in the field would submit to such a system during actual warfare.

That the duties of supply may be effectually carried out on service, it is essential for the proper efficiency of the soldiers to be fed that those duties should be performed by an administration closely watched over and supervised by the general through his staff officers. Supply duties are of a purely executive nature; the supply officers buy, store, and issue food, &c. Staff officers, on the other hand, have no executive functions to perform; they are the eyes, ears, and mouth-pieces of the general they represent; without him they have no position or authority. They can give no orders of themselves; they are bits of the general spread out at different points through the force he commands, multiplying his powers of vision and voice. They supervise the work performed by subordinate generals to see that the commander's orders as to discipline and combatant duties are duly and properly executed; and it is as essential for the wellbeing and success of an army that they should also supervise the civil departments, enabling the general-in-chief to check their irregularities, and to keep their officers up to the proper mark, so that he may be certain that his men are well fed and their wants well supplied. These supervising duties can never be performed effectively, or to the satisfaction of the army, by officers of the Department, or by any officers springing from the civil departments concerned. All who have had experience in the ways of soldiers—who, from having shared the same bivouac fire with them on service, know their views and mode of reasoning—know well how essential it is that they should be satisfied, and that they should feel that their complaints are attended to, and that they should trust those who have to watch over the supply of their wants. A soldier is always suspicious about

what he terms "his rights," and the great bond that exists between the British private and his officer is based upon the implicit trust that the former has in the latter's honour. The tradition of the army has taught him from the first day he donned her Majesty's uniform, that his officer was a man belonging socially to a class above all petty temptations, and every day's subsequent experience taught him to look upon him as his protector from the frauds of all classes or departments intrusted with supplying his wants. There is not the remotest intention here of bringing any charge against any civil branch belonging to the army; but no matter how unjust the accusation is, it is well known to all combatant officers in the army, and even amongst them the feeling is shared by many, that what is known to them as "War Office authorities," including all the civil departments belonging to it, are ever on the lookout to defraud the soldier of what is his due. Where is the soldier in the army, be he general or private, who does not believe most sincerely that he has been cheated over and over again upon the score of barrack damages? The Control Department contains officers of as high a moral standard as can be found elsewhere, and far be it from us to cast any slur upon their honour; but traditions of frauds committed in olden times by commissaries still hang round all supply departments, and it is difficult to disabuse the military mind of belief in such stories; they have given rise to a rooted suspicion that is still felt by the soldier in all his dealings with those who furnish him with food. As long as he had the power of complaining to his officers, who could complain direct by the nearest general or staff officer, he knew that as they had no possible interest in either giving him short weight or inferior rations, they would see that

he got "his rights;" but now that he knows his complaints go to officers of the department by which the rations are issued, he believes that he can be injured with no chance of redress. Some may perhaps think that the British soldier is such a dull fellow that he does not understand this peculiarity in the working of the new system. This is a great mistake; for whatever is known and much commented upon by the officers, is soon universally known to the men; and the grievance as expressed in modified terms by the officer, does not lose in magnitude when translated into the private's language. That the Control Department is distrusted by the army is a fact to be ascertained by questioning the first officer you meet. This mistrust has given rise to such dislike, that, in one of the oldest and largest military clubs this year, when, at a general meeting, some hundreds of members being present, it was proposed to substitute the words "Control officers" for "Commissariat officers" in the enumeration of those who were eligible to become members, there was only one member besides the proposer—a Control officer—and the seconder who voted for it; the proposition was, in fact, received by groans of disapproval from all sides. This most unprecedented expression of feeling on the part of the officers of the army is a fair indication of what they think of this new department that has come of late so mysteriously into existence. Intended for the use of the army, it has been created in opposition and in wanton disregard to the wishes of all ranks, and in violation of its most cherished traditions.

We have recently heard a great deal of the privileges of the Household troops; and the levellers, in sweeping away some abuses, have insisted upon pulling down also the honorary peculiarities that are the

distinctive marks of the sovereign's body-guard in all countries.

One of those distinctions was, that orders could only be given to our Guards by their own officers. We have, however, only taken this distinction from these time-honoured troops to confer it upon the Control. A staff officer can convey his general's orders either verbally or in writing to any one under that general's command, no matter what may be his position in the combatant hierarchy; but he cannot do so to the controller, who will receive orders only from his general, and from him even only in writing. This is a system that it may be just possible to carry on peace manœuvres under, but not even a Napoleon could make war under it, even should it be possible to find any able general who would attempt to do so. To arrange the details connected with moving troops, and to issue instructions so as to carry out the views of the general commanding, is one of the most important duties devolving upon a staff officer. He has to secure that at all times during the operation the several columns are in a position to fight; the least hitch may cause confusion, ending in disaster. In making these arrangements, administrative considerations crop up everywhere, so that it is ridiculous to hope that they can be well and efficiently made, unless the officer intrusted with this most responsible duty can convey orders to the Control Department in the same manner as he can to the medical department, and to all generals commanding corps or divisions.

To have with an army in the field a department that wishes to control everything, to interfere with military movements, assuming to itself military functions that can only be properly and effectively performed by combatant officers, whilst at the same time it rebels against any

military control being exercised over its officers, or the manner in which they perform their duties, is to court disaster. The department is a monstrosity, a fungus that must be cleared off before the stem can be brought to a healthy condition.

There were a few who fondly hoped that the establishment of this Department would be an economical measure. Their hopes have been sadly disappointed. Its numbers are increasing steadily. This year the number of Control officers employed for the manœuvres was, we believe, above 120—that is, in round numbers, 8 Control officers for every 2000 men employed. Last year the number was far less, although the baggage of regiments was then carried by that Department; whereas this year it was, as already stated, carried by the regiments themselves, who found the drivers and the officers to look after it. Those who have campaigned in India, where we are told that columns consisting of several thousands take the field with only one commissariat officer to perform for them all the duties now devolving upon the Control Department—the custody and issue of all military stores excepted—will be astonished when they learn, that to administer to the wants of less than 30,000 men, divided into two forces, it was found necessary to have over 120 Control officers. If it was necessary to have 8 Control officers to every 2000 men in the richest of countries, intersected in every direction by roads and railways, and in railway and telegraphic communication with the metropolis and all the great markets in the kingdom, and when the troops were supplied with rations by contract made before the manœuvres began, we are curious to know how many would be necessary in an enemy's country, where contracts would be impossible, and where, perhaps, there would be few

roads and no railways? A psalm of praise has been sung over the Control exploits at these manœuvres, as if the supply of our small force, circumstanced as already described, was a matter of any great difficulty. It was not as if the movements were unfettered by supply considerations, and as if the Control had to feed the divisions wherever the generals chose to encamp, or as if the Control arrangements depended upon the military situation of the moment; but it must be remembered that the generals had to make their operations accord with and fit into the arrangements made before the operations began by the Control with contractors for feeding the men each day at certain indicated spots. It was not as if these 120 Control officers had to scour the country to purchase supplies according as the troops moved. With the exception of a couple of days or so of bread baked in commissariat ovens, when the troops were close to Amesbury and Wily, the whole affair of supplying them with food was one of contract.

This being the case, and as we may presume it is to be the established system for our manœuvres in future, it would be a great economy if the affair was put into the hands of men like Messrs. Spiers and Pond, who, without any Control officers to look on, would, we feel sure, carry out the supply arrangements with just as much satisfaction to the men to be fed, and would give them fresh meat and bread every day, instead of the salt pork and biscuit issued so many days whilst they were marching.

If it was desired that the department that is responsible for feeding the army, whether it be called Control or Commissariat, should obtain some real practice in the duties that would devolve upon it, a very different system should be pursued; its officers should be practised in making local purchases and contracts,

and in drawing the supplies required as much as possible from the districts operated in. This might be a little more expensive; and as it would entail labour and great trouble upon the department concerned, it is to be feared that its officers would not advocate its being tried.

As the troops are now fed during the manœuvres, the Control officers learn less of the work that would devolve upon them in war than any others—doctors, of course, excepted. The country is therefore put to a very needless expense in having so many of them employed. They are highly paid, and have to be supplied with Government horses.

We maintain that the Control Department has been put to no sufficient test during these manœuvres; the duties that have devolved upon its officers have been of the lightest possible kind. We have not been able to prove whether its officers really could or could not feed an army in war; but the majority of officers outside the Department, and some good ones in it, who have given administrative subjects much attention, have been able to arrive at a conclusion as to the Control system, and few will deny the statement that, as organised at present under its published regulations, it cannot be employed for the supply of an army in the field, if war is to be carried on successfully. This is a most serious matter for the country, and it is to be hoped that the

system may soon be made the subject of inquiry by a Royal Commission, so that opinions may be obtained from practical officers who have no departmental interests to serve, and no ends but the welfare of the army to aim at.

In answer to the questions with which we began this article, after duly considering the events of the past manœuvres, we believe them to have been successful; and that as an army, and consequently as a nation, we have had over and over again our money's worth in the amount of practical instruction acquired by the combatants. Every one that was desirous of learning has learnt much—far more even than he is aware of. The dullest, and even those who did not wish to learn, have learnt despite themselves, and without knowing they have done so. We trust, therefore, that Parliament may annually provide the money required for such a useful object. If, in addition to the instruction afforded, our manœuvres of this year lead to a reform being effected in the Control Department, and to the institution of a system of tactics suited for war as now carried on, the expenditure of the £99,000 voted for them will have been the means, whenever our next war may be thrust upon us, of saving millions of money, and of saving what we can spare far less, the lives of thousands, and perhaps the honour of our arms.

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THE PARISIANS.

BOOK THIRD.—CHAPTER I.

THE next day the guests at the Morleys' had assembled when Vane entered. His apology for unpunctuality was cut short by the lively hostess: "Your pardon is granted without the humiliation of asking for it; we know that the characteristic of the English is always to be a little behindhand."

She then proceeded to introduce him to the American Minister, to a distinguished American poet, with a countenance striking for mingled sweetness and power, and one or two other of her countrymen sojourning at Paris; and this ceremony over, dinner was announced, and she bade Graham offer his arm to Mademoiselle Cicogna.

"Have you ever visited the United States, Mademoiselle?" asked Vane, as they seated themselves at the table.

"No."

"It is a voyage you are sure to make soon."

"Why so?"

"Because report says you will

create a great sensation at the very commencement of your career; and the New World is ever eager to welcome each celebrity that is achieved in the Old; more especially that which belongs to your enchanting art."

"True, sir," said an American senator, solemnly striking into the conversation; "we are an appreciative people; and if that lady be as fine a singer as I am told, she might command any amount of dollars."

Isaura coloured, and turning to Graham, asked him in a low voice if he were fond of music.

"I ought of course to say 'yes,'" answered Graham, in the same tone; "but I doubt if that 'yes' would be an honest one. In some moods, music—if a kind of music I like—affects me very deeply; in other moods, not at all. And I cannot bear much at a time. A concert wearies me shamefully; even an opera always seems to me a great deal too long. But I ought to add

that I am no judge of music; that music was never admitted into my education; and, between ourselves, I doubt if there be one Englishman in five hundred who would care for opera or concert if it were not the fashion to say he did. Does my frankness revolt you?"

"On the contrary—I sometimes doubt, especially of late, if I am fond of music myself."

"Signorina—pardon me—it is impossible that you should not be. Genius can never be untrue to itself, and must love that in which it excels—that by which it communicates joy, and," he added, with a half-suppressed sigh, "attains to glory."

"Genius is a divine word, and not to be applied to a singer," said Isaura, with a humility in which there was an earnest sadness.

Graham was touched and startled; but before he could answer, the American Minister appealed to him across the table, asking if he had quoted accurately a passage in a speech by Graham's distinguished father, in regard to the share which England ought to take in the political affairs of Europe.

The conversation now became general; very political and very serious. Graham was drawn into it, and grew animated and eloquent.

Isaura listened to him with admiration. She was struck by what seemed to her a nobleness of sentiment which elevated his theme above the level of commonplace polemics. She was pleased to notice, in the attentive silence of his intelligent listeners, that they shared the effect produced on herself. In fact, Graham Vane was a born orator, and his studies had been those of a political thinker. In common talk he was but the accomplished man of the world, easy and frank and genial, with a touch of good-natured sarcasm. But when the subject

started drew him upward to those heights in which politics become the science of humanity, he seemed a changed being. His cheek glowed, his eye brightened, his voice mellowed into richer tones, his language became unconsciously adorned. In such moments there might scarcely be an audience, even differing from him in opinion, which would not have acknowledged his spell.

When the party adjourned to the *salon*, Isaura said softly to Graham, "I understand why you did not cultivate music; and I think, too, that I can now understand what effects the human voice can produce on human minds, without recurring to the art of song."

"Ah," said Graham, with a pleased smile, "do not make me ashamed of my former rudeness by the revenge of compliment, and, above all, do not disparage your own art by supposing that any prose effect of voice in its utterance of mind can interpret that which music alone can express, even to listeners so uncultivated as myself. Am I not told truly by musical composers, when I ask them to explain in words what they say in their music, that such explanation is impossible, that music has a language of its own untranslatable by words?"

"Yes," said Isaura, with thoughtful brow but brightening eyes, "you are told truly. It was only the other day that I was pondering over that truth."

"But what recesses of mind, of heart, of soul, this untranslatable language penetrates and brightens up! How incomplete the grand nature of man—though man the grandest—would be, if you struck out of his reason the comprehension of poetry, music, and religion! In each are reached and are sounded deeps in his reason otherwise concealed from himself. History, knowledge, science, stop at the point

in which mystery begins. There they meet with the world of shadow. Not an inch of that world can they penetrate without the aid of poetry and religion, two necessities of intellectual man much more nearly allied than the votaries of the practical and the positive suppose. To the aid and elevation of both those necessities comes in music, and there has never existed a religion in the world which has not demanded music as its ally. If, as I said frankly, it is only in certain moods of my mind that I enjoy music, it is only because in certain moods of my mind I am capable of quitting the guidance of prosaic reason for the world of shadow; that I am so susceptible as at every hour, were my nature perfect, I should be to the mysterious influences of poetry and religion. Do you understand what I wish to express?"

"Yes, I do, and clearly."

"Then, Signorina, you are forbidden to undervalue the gift of song. You must feel its power over the heart, when you enter the opera-house; over the soul, when you kneel in a cathedral."

"Oh," cried Isaura, with enthusiasm, a rich glow mantling over her lovely face, "how I thank you! Is it you who say you do not love music? How much better you understand it than I did till this moment!"

Here Mrs. Morley, joined by the American poet, came to the corner in which the Englishman and the singer had nixed themselves. The

poet began to talk, the other guests gathered round, and every one listened reverentially till the party broke up. Colonel Morley banded Isaura to her carriage—the she-mountebank again fell to the lot of Graham.

"Signor," said she, as he respectfully placed her shawl round her scarlet-and-gilt jacket, "are we so far from Paris that you cannot spare the time to call? My child does not sing in public, but at home you can hear her. It is not every woman's voice that is sweetest at home."

Graham bowed, and said he would call on the morrow.

Isaura mused in silent delight over the words which had so extolled the art of the singer. Alas, poor child! she could not guess that in those words, reconciling her to the profession of the stage, the speaker was pleading against his own heart.

There was in Graham's nature, as I think it commonly is in that of most true orators, a wonderful degree of *intellectual conscience* which impelled him to acknowledge the benignant influences of song, and to set before the young singer the noblest incentives to the profession to which he deemed her assuredly destined. But in so doing he must have felt that he was widening the gulf between her life and his own; perhaps he wished to widen it in proportion as he dreaded to listen to any voice in his heart which asked if the gulf might not be overleapt.

CHAPTER II.

On the morrow Graham called at the Villa at A***. The two ladies received him in Isaura's chosen sitting-room.

Somehow or other, conversation

at first languished. Graham was reserved and distant, Isaura shy and embarrassed.

The Venosta had the *frais* of making talk to herself. Probably

at another time Graham would have been amused and interested in the observation of a character new to him, and thoroughly southern—lovable, not more from its *naïve* simplicity of kindness than from various little foibles and vanities, all of which were harmless, and some of them endearing as those of a child whom it is easy to make happy, and whom it seems so cruel to pain: and with all the Venosta's deviations from the polished and tranquil good taste of the *beau monde*, she had that indescribable grace which rarely deserts a Florentine, so that you might call her odd but not vulgar; while, though uneducated, except in the way of her old profession, and never having troubled herself to read anything but a *libretto*, and the pious books commended to her by her confessor, the artless babble of her talk every now and then flashed out with a quaint humour, lighting up terse fragments of the old Italian wisdom which had mysteriously embedded themselves in the groundwork of her mind.

But Graham was not at this time disposed to judge the poor Venosta kindly or fairly. Isaura had taken high rank in his thoughts. He felt an impatient resentment mingled with anxiety and compassionate tenderness at a companionship which seemed to him derogatory to the position he would have assigned to a creature so gifted, and unsafe as a guide amidst the perils and trials to which the youth, the beauty, and the destined profession of Isaura were exposed. Like most Englishmen—especially Englishmen wise in the knowledge of life—he held in fastidious regard the proprieties and conventions by which the dignity of woman is fenced round; and of those proprieties and conventions the Venosta naturally appeared to him a very unsatisfactory guardian and representative.

Happily unconscious of those hostile prepossessions, the elder Signora chatted on very gaily to the visitor. She was in excellent spirits; people had been very civil to her both at Colonel Morley's and M. Louvier's. The American Minister had praised the scarlet jacket. She was convinced she had made a sensation two nights running. When the *amour propre* is pleased, the tongue is freed.

The Venosta ran on in praise of Paris and the Parisians, of Louvier and his *soirée* and the pistachio ice; of the Americans and a certain *crème de maraschino* which she hoped the Signor Inglese had not failed to taste—the *crème de maraschino* led her thoughts back to Italy. Then she grew mournful—how she missed the native *beau ciel*! Paris was pleasant, but how absurd to call it "*le Paradis des Femmes*"—as if *les Femmes* could find Paradise in a *brouillard*!

"But," she exclaimed, with vivacity of voice and gesticulation, "the Signor does not come to hear the parrot talk. He is engaged to come that he may hear the nightingale sing. A drop of honey attracts the fly more than a bottle of vinegar."

Graham could not help smiling at this adage. "I submit," said he, "to your comparison as regards myself; but certainly anything less like a bottle of vinegar than your amiable conversation I cannot well conceive. However, the metaphor apart, I scarcely know how I dare ask Mademoiselle to sing after the confession I made to her last night."

"What confession?" asked the Venosta.

"That I know nothing of music, and doubt if I can honestly say that I am fond of it."

"Not fond of music! Impossible! You slander yourself. He who loves not music would have a dull time of it in heaven. But you are English, and perhaps have only

heard the music of your own country. Bad, very bad—a heretic's music! Now listen."

Seating herself at the piano, she began an air from the "*Lucia*," crying out to Isaura to come and sing to her accompaniment.

"Do you really wish it?" asked Isaura of Graham, fixing on him questioning timid eyes.

"I cannot say how much I wish to hear you."

Isaura moved to the instrument, and Graham stood behind her. Perhaps he felt that he should judge more impartially of her voice if not subjected to the charm of her face.

But the first note of the voice held him spellbound: in itself, the organ was of the rarest order, mellow and rich, but so soft that its power was lost in its sweetness, and so exquisitely fresh in every note.

But the singer's charm was less in voice than in feeling—she conveyed to the listener so much more than was said by the words, or even implied by the music. Her song in this caught the art of the painter who impresses the mind with the consciousness of a something which the eye cannot detect on the canvas.

She seemed to breathe out from the depths of her heart the intense pathos of the original romance, so far exceeding that of the opera—the human tenderness, the mystic terror of a tragic love-tale more solemn in its sweetness than that of Verona.

When her voice died away no applause came—not even a murmur. Isaura bashfully turned round to steal a glance at her silent listener, and beheld moistened eyes and quivering lips. At that moment she was reconciled to her art. Graham rose abruptly and walked to the window.

"Do you doubt now if you are fond of music?" cried the Venosta.

"This is more than music," answered Graham, still with averted face. Then, after a short pause, he

approached Isaura and said, with a melancholy half-smile—

"I do not think, Mademoiselle, that I could dare to hear you often; it would take me too far from the hard real world; and he who would not be left behindhand on the road that he must journey cannot indulge frequent excursions into fairyland."

"Yet," said Isaura, in a tone yet sadder, "I was told in my childhood, by one whose genius gives authority to her words, that beside the real world lies the ideal. The real world then seemed rough to me. 'Escape,' said my counselor, 'is granted from that stony thoroughfare into the fields beyond its formal hedgerows. The ideal world has its sorrows, but it never admits despair.' That counsel then, methought, decided my choice of life. I know not now if it has done so."

"Fate," answered Graham, slowly and thoughtfully—"Fate, which is not the ruler but the servant of Providence, decides our choice of life, and rarely from outward circumstances. Usually the motive power is within. We apply the word genius to the minds of the gifted few; but in all of us there is a genius that is inborn, a pervading something which distinguishes our very identity, and dictates to the conscience that which we are best fitted to do and to be. In so dictating it compels our choice of life; or if we resist the dictate, we find at the close that we have gone astray. My choice of life thus compelled is on the stony thoroughfares—yours in the green fields."

As he thus said, his face became clouded and mournful.

The Venosta, quickly tired of a conversation in which she had no part, and having various little household matters to attend to, had during this dialogue slipped unobserved from the room; yet neither Isaura

nor Graham felt the sudden consciousness that they were alone which belongs to lovers.

"Why," asked Isaura, with that magic smile reflected in countless dimples which, even when her words were those of a man's reasoning, made them seem gentle with a woman's sentiment—"why must your road through the world be so exclusively the stony one? It is not from necessity—it cannot be from taste. And whatever definition you give to genius, surely it is not your own inborn genius that dictates to you a constant exclusive adherence to the commonplace of life."

"Ah, Mademoiselle! do not misrepresent me. I did not say that I could not sometimes quit the real world for fairyland—I said that I could not do so often. My vocation is not that of a poet or artist."

"It is that of an orator, I know," said Isaura, kindling;—"so they tell me, and I believe them. But is not the orator somewhat akin to the poet? Is not oratory an art?"

"Let us dismiss the word orator: as applied to English public life, it is a very deceptive expression. The Englishman who wishes to influence his countrymen by force of words spoken must mix with them in their beaten thoroughfares—must make himself master of their practical views and interests—must be conversant with their prosaic occupations and business—must understand how to adjust their loftiest aspirations to their material welfare—must avoid, as the fault most dangerous to himself and to others, that kind of eloquence which is called oratory in France, and which has helped to make the French the worst politicians in Europe. Alas, Mademoiselle! I fear that an English statesman would appear to you a very dull orator."

"I see that I spoke foolishly—yes, you show me that the world of

the statesman lies apart from that of the artist. Yet——"

"Yet what?"

"May not the ambition of both be the same?"

"How so?"

"To refine the rude, to exalt the mean—to identify their own fame with some new beauty, some new glory, added to the treasure-house of all."

Graham bowed his head reverently, and then raised it with the flush of enthusiasm on his cheek and brow.

"Oh, Mademoiselle!" he exclaimed, "what a sure guide and what a noble inspirer to a true Englishman's ambition nature has fitted you to be, were it not——" He paused abruptly.

This outburst took Isaura utterly by surprise. She had been accustomed to the language of compliment till it had begun to pall, but a compliment of this kind was the first that had ever reached her ear. She had no words in answer to it; involuntarily she placed her hand on her heart as if to still its beatings. But the unfinished exclamation, "Were it not," troubled her more than the preceding words had flattered—and mechanically she murmured, "Were it not—what?"

"Oh," answered Graham, affecting a tone of gaiety, "I felt too ashamed of my selfishness as man to finish my sentence."

"Do so, or I shall fancy you refrained lest you might wound me as woman."

"Not so—on the contrary; had I gone on it would have been to say that a woman of your genius, and more especially of such mastery in the most popular and fascinating of all arts, could not be contented if she inspired nobler thoughts in a single breast—she must belong to the public, or rather the public must belong to her: it is but a

corner of her heart that an individual can occupy, and even that individual must merge his existence in hers—must be contented to reflect a ray of the light she sheds on admiring thousands. Who could dare to say to you, ‘Renounce your career—confine your genius, your art, to the petty circle of home’? To an actress—a singer—with whose fame the world rings, home would be a prison. Pardon me, pardon—”

Isaura had turned away her face to hide tears that would force their way, but she held out her hand to him with a childlike frankness, and said softly, “I am not offended.” Graham did not trust himself to continue the same strain of conversation. Breaking into a new subject, he said, after a constrained pause, “Will you think it very impertinent in so new an acquaintance, if I ask how it is that you, an Italian, know our language as a native? and is it by Italian teachers that you have been trained to think and to feel?”

“Mr. Selby, my second father, was an Englishman, and did not

speak any other language with comfort to himself. He was very fond of me—and had he been really my father I could not have loved him more: we were constant companions till—till I lost him.”

“And no mother left to console you.” Isaura shook her head mournfully, and the Venosta here re-entered.

Graham felt conscious that he had already stayed too long, and took leave.

They knew that they were to meet that evening at the Savarins’.

Graham did not feel unmixed pleasure at that thought; the more he knew of Isaura, the more he felt self-reproach that he had allowed himself to know her at all.

But after he had left, Isaura sang low to herself the song which had so affected her listener; then she fell into abstracted reverie, but she felt a strange and new sort of happiness. In dressing for M. Savarin’s dinner, and twining the classic ivy wreath into her dark locks, her Italian servant exclaimed, “How beautiful the Signorina looks to-night!”

CHAPTER III.

M. Savarin was one of the most brilliant of that galaxy of literary men which shed lustre on the reign of Louis Philippe.

His was an intellect peculiarly French in its lightness and grace. Neither England nor Germany nor America has produced any resemblance to it. Ireland has, in Thomas Moore; but then in Irish genius there is so much that is French.

M. Savarin was free from the ostentatious extravagance which had come into vogue with the Empire. His house and establishment were modestly maintained within the limit of an income chiefly,

perhaps entirely, derived from literary profits.

Though he gave frequent dinners, it was but to few at a time, and without show or pretence. Yet the dinners, though simple, were perfect of their kind; and the host so contrived to infuse his own playful gaiety into the temper of his guests, that the feasts at his house were considered the pleasantest at Paris. On this occasion the party extended to ten, the largest number his table admitted.

All the French guests belonged to the Liberal party, though in changing tints of the tricolor. *Place aux dames*, first to be named were

the Countess de Craon and Madame Vertot—both without husbands. The Countess had buried the Count, Madame Vertot had separated from Monsieur. The Countess was very handsome, but she was sixty. Madame Vertot was twenty years younger, but she was very plain. She had quarrelled with the distinguished author for whose sake she had separated from Monsieur, and no man had since presumed to think that he could console a lady so plain for the loss of an author so distinguished.

Both these ladies were very clever. The Countess had written lyrical poems entitled 'Cries of Liberty,' and a drama of which Danton was the hero, and the moral too revolutionary for admission to the stage; but at heart the Countess was not at all a revolutionist—the last person in the world to do or desire anything that could bring a washwoman an inch nearer to a countess. She was one of those persons who play with fire in order to appear enlightened.

Madame Vertot was of severer mould. She had knelt at the feet of M. Thiers, and went into the historico-political line. She had written a remarkable book upon the modern Carthage (meaning England), and more recently a work that had excited much attention upon the Balance of Power, in which she proved it to be the interest of civilisation and the necessity of Europe that Belgium should be added to France, and Prussia circumscribed to the bounds of its original margravate. She showed how easily these two objects could have been effected by a constitutional monarch instead of an egotistical Emperor. Madame Vertot was a decided Orleanist.

Both these ladies condescended to put aside authorship in general society. Next amongst our guests

let me place the Count de Passy and *Madame son épouse*: the Count was seventy-one, and, it is needless to add, a type of Frenchman rapidly vanishing, and not likely to find itself renewed. How shall I describe him so as to make my English reader understand? Let me try by analogy. Suppose a man of great birth and fortune, who in his youth had been an enthusiastic friend of Lord Byron and a jocund companion of George IV—who had in him an immense degree of lofty romantic sentiment with an equal degree of well-bred worldly cynicism, but who, on account of that admixture, which is rare, kept a high rank in either of the two societies into which, speaking broadly, civilised life divides itself—the romantic and the cynical. The Count de Passy had been the most ardent among the young disciples of Châteaubriand—the most brilliant among the young courtiers of Charles X. Need I add that he had been a terrible lady-killer?

But in spite of his admiration of Châteaubriand and his allegiance to Charles X., the Count had been always true to those caprices of the French *noblesse* from which he descended—caprices which destroyed them in the old Revolution—caprices belonging to the splendid ignorance of their nation in general, and their order in particular. Speaking without regard to partial exceptions, the French *gentilhomme* is essentially a Parisian; a Parisian is essentially impressionable to the impulse or fashion of the moment. Is it *à la mode* for the moment to be Liberal or anti-Liberal? Parisians embrace and kiss each other, and swear through life and death to adhere for ever to the *mode* of the moment. The Three Days were the *mode* of the moment—the Count de Passy became an enthusiastic Orleanist. Louis Philippe was

very gracious to him. He was decorated—he was named *préfet* of his department—he was created senator—he was about to be sent Minister to a German Court when Louis Philippe fell. The Republic was proclaimed. The Count caught the popular contagion, and after exchanging tears and kisses with patriots whom a week before he had called *canaille*, he swore eternal fidelity to the Republic. The fashion of the moment suddenly became Napoleonic, and with the *coup d'état* the Republic was metamorphosed into an Empire. The Count wept on the bosoms of all the *Vieilles Moustaches* he could find, and rejoiced that the sun of Austerlitz had re-arisen. But after the fall of Mexico the sun of Austerlitz looked very sickly. Imperialism was fast going out of fashion. The Count transferred his affection to Jules Favre, and joined the ranks of the advanced Liberals. During all these political changes, the Count had remained very much the same man in private life; agreeable, good-natured, witty, and, above all, a devotee of the fair sex. When he had reached the age of sixty-eight he was still *forte bel homme*—unmarried, with a grand presence and charming manner. At that age he said, "*Je me range*," and married a young lady of eighteen. She adored her husband, and was wildly jealous of him; while the Count did not seem at all jealous of her, and submitted to her adoration with a gentle shrug of the shoulders.

The three other guests who, with Graham and the two Italian ladies, made up the complement of ten, were the German Count von Rudesheim, whom Vane had met at M. Louvier's, a celebrated French physician named Bacourt, and a young author whom Savarin had admitted into his clique and de-

clared to be of rare promise. This author, whose real name was Gustave Rameau, but who, to prove, I suppose, the sincerity of that scorn for ancestry which he professed, published his verses under the patrician designation of Alphonse de Valcour, was about twenty-four, and might have passed at the first glance for younger; but, looking at him closely, the signs of old age were already stamped on his visage.

He was undersized, and of a feeble slender frame. In the eyes of women and artists the defects of his frame were redeemed by the extraordinary beauty of the face. His black hair, carefully parted in the centre, and worn long and flowing, contrasted the whiteness of a high though narrow forehead, and the delicate pallor of his cheeks. His features were very regular, his eyes singularly bright; but the expression of the face spoke of fatigue and exhaustion—the silky locks were already thin, and interspersed with threads of silver—the bright eyes shone out from sunken orbits—the lines round the mouth were marked as they are in the middle age of one who has lived too fast.

It was a countenance that might have excited a compassionate and tender interest, but for something arrogant and supercilious in the expression—something that demanded not tender pity but enthusiastic admiration. Yet that expression was displeasing rather to men than to women; and one could well conceive that, among the latter, the enthusiastic admiration it challenged would be largely conceded.

The conversation at dinner was in complete contrast to that at the American's the day before. There the talk, though animated, had been chiefly earnest and serious—here it was all touch and go, sally and repartee. The subjects were the light *on dits* and lively anecdotes of the

day, not free from literature and politics, but both treated as matters of *persiflage*, hovered round with a jest, and quitted with an epigram. The two French lady authors, the Count de Passy, the physician, and the host, far outshone all the other guests. Now and then, however, the German Count struck in with an ironical remark condensing a great deal of grave wisdom, and the young author with ruder and more biting sarcasm. If the sarcasm told, he showed his triumph by a low-pitched laugh; if it failed, he evinced his displeasure by a contemptuous sneer or a grim scowl.

Isaura and Graham were not seated near each other, and were for the most part contented to be listeners.

On adjourning to the *salon* after dinner, Graham, however, was approaching the chair in which Isaura had placed herself, when the young author, forestalling him, dropped into the seat next to her, and began a conversation in a voice so low that it might have passed for a whisper. The Englishman drew back and observed them. He soon perceived, with a pang of jealousy not unmingled with scorn, that the author's talk appeared to interest Isaura. She listened with evident attention; and when she spoke in return, though Graham did not hear her words, he could observe on her expressive countenance an increased gentleness of aspect.

"I hope," said the physician, joining Graham, as most of the other guests gathered around Savarin, who was in his liveliest vein of anecdote and wit—"I hope that the fair Italian will not allow that ink-bottle imp to persuade her that she has fallen in love with him."

"Do young ladies generally find him so seductive?" asked Graham, with a forced smile.

"Probably enough. He has the

reputation of being very clever and very wicked, and that is a sort of character which has the serpent's fascination for the daughters of Eve."

"Is the reputation merited?"

"As to the cleverness, I am not a fair judge. I dislike that sort of writing which is neither manlike nor womanlike, and in which young Rameau excels. He has the knack of finding very exaggerated phrases by which to express commonplace thoughts. He writes verses about love in words so stormy that you might fancy that Jove was descending upon Semele. But when you examine his words, as a sober pathologist like myself is disposed to do, your fear for the peace of households vanishes—they are '*Vox et præterea nihil*'—no man really in love would use them. He writes prose about the wrongs of humanity. You feel for humanity. You say, 'Grant the wrongs, now for the remedy,' and you find nothing but balderdash. Still I am bound to say that both in verse and prose Gustave Rameau is in unison with a corrupt taste of the day, and therefore he is coming into vogue. So much as to his writings: as to his wickedness, you have only to look at him to feel sure that he is not a hundredth part so wicked as he wishes to seem. In a word, then, Mons. Gustave Rameau is a type of that somewhat numerous class among the youth of Paris, which I call 'the Lost Tribe of Absinthe.' There is a set of men who begin to live full gallop while they are still boys. As a general rule, they are originally of the sickly frames which can scarcely even trot, much less gallop, without the spur of stimulants, and no stimulant so fascinates their peculiar nervous system as absinthe. The number of patients in this set who at the age of thirty are more worn out than septuagenarians, increases so rapidly as to make one dread to think what

will be the next race of Frenchmen. To the predilection for absinthe young Rameau and the writers of his set add the imitation of Heine, after, indeed, the manner of caricaturists, who effect a likeness striking in proportion as it is ugly. It is not easy to imitate the pathos and the wit of Heine, but it is easy to imitate his defiance of the Deity, his mockery of right and wrong, his relentless war on that heroic standard of thought and action which the writers who exalt their nation intuitively preserve. Rameau cannot be a Heine, but he can be to Heine what a misshapen snarling dwarf is to a mangled blaspheming Titan. Yet he interests the women in general, and he evidently interests the fair Signorina in especial."

Just as Bacourt finished that last sentence, Isaura lifted the head which had hitherto bent in an earnest listening attitude that seemed to justify the Doctor's remarks, and looked round. Her eyes met Graham's with the fearless candour which made half the charm of their bright yet soft intelligence. But she dropped them suddenly with a half-start and a change of colour, for the expression of Graham's face was unlike that which she had hitherto seen on it—it was hard, stern, somewhat disdainful. A minute or so afterwards she rose, and in passing across the room towards the group round the host, paused at a table covered with books and prints near to which Graham was standing—alone. The Doctor had departed in company with the German Count.

Isaura took up one of the prints.

"Ah!" she exclaimed, "Sorrento—my Sorrento. Have you ever visited Sorrento, Mr. Vane?"

Her question and her movement were evidently in conciliation. Was the conciliation prompted by coquetry, or by a sentiment more innocent and artless?

Graham doubted, and replied coldly, as he bent over the print—

"I once stayed there a few days, but my recollection of it is not sufficiently lively to enable me to recognise its features in this design."

"That is the house, at least so they say, of Tasso's father; of course you visited that?"

"Yes, it was a hotel in my time; I lodged there."

"And I too. There I first read 'the Gerusalemme.'" The last words were said in Italian, with a low measured tone, inwardly and dreamily.

A somewhat sharp and incisive voice speaking in French here struck in and prevented Graham's rejoinder: "*Que! joli dessin!* What is it, Mademoiselle?"

Graham recoiled: the speaker was Gustave Rameau, who had, unobserved, first watched Isaura, then rejoined her side.

"A view of Sorrento, Monsieur, but it does not do justice to the place. I was pointing out the house which belonged to Tasso's father."

"Tasso! *Hein!* and which is the fair Eleonora's?"

"Monsieur," answered Isaura, rather startled at that question from a professed *homme de lettres*, "Eleonora did not live at Sorrento."

"*Tant pis pour Sorrente,*" said the *homme de lettres*, carelessly. "No one would care for Tasso if it were not for Eleonora."

"I should rather have thought," said Graham, "that no one would have cared for Eleonora if it were not for Tasso."

Rameau glanced at the Englishman superciliously.

"*Pardon, Monsieur*—in every age a love-story keeps its interest; but who cares nowadays for *le clinquant du Tasse!*"

"*Le clinquant du Tasse!*" exclaimed Isaura, indignantly.

"The expression is Boileau's,

Mademoiselle, in ridicule of the '*Sot de qualité*,' who prefers

'*Le clinquant du Tasse à tout l'or de Virgile.*'

But for my part I have as little faith in the last as the first."

"I do not know Latin, and have therefore not read Virgil," said Isaura.

"Possibly," remarked Graham, "Monsieur does not know Italian, and has therefore not read Tasso."

"If that be meant in sarcasm," retorted Rameau, "I construe it as a compliment. A Frenchman who is contented to study the masterpieces of modern literature need learn no language and read no authors but his own."

Isaura laughed her pleasant silvery laugh. "I should admire the frankness of that boast, Monsieur, if in our talk just now you had not spoken as contemptuously of what we are accustomed to consider French masterpieces as you have done of Virgil and Tasso."

"Ah, Mademoiselle! it is not my fault if you have had teachers of taste so *rococo* as to bid you find masterpieces in the tiresome stilted tragedies of Corneille and Racine. Poetry of a court, not of a people—one simple novel, one simple stanza that probes the hidden recesses of the human heart, reveals the sores of this wretched social state, denounces the evils of superstition, kingcraft, and priestcraft, is worth a library of the rubbish which pedagogues call 'the classics.' We agree, at least, in one thing, Mademoiselle; we both do homage to the genius of your friend Madame de Grantmesnil."

"Your friend, Signorina!" cried Graham, incredulously; "is Madame de Grantmesnil your friend?"

"The dearest I have in the world."

Graham's face darkened; he turn-

ed away in silence, and in another minute vanished from the room, persuading himself that he felt not one pang of jealousy in leaving Gustave Rameau by the side of Isaura. "Her dearest friend Madame de Grantmesnil!" he muttered.

A word now on Isaura's chief correspondent. Madame de Grantmesnil was a woman of noble birth and ample fortune. She had separated from her husband in the second year after marriage. She was a singularly eloquent writer, surpassed among contemporaries of her sex in popularity and renown only by Georges Sand.

At least as fearless as that great novelist in the frank exposition of her views, she had commenced her career in letters by a work of astonishing power and pathos, directed against the institution of marriage as regulated in Roman Catholic communities. I do not know that it said more on this delicate subject than the English Milton has said; but then Milton did not write for a Roman Catholic community, nor adopt a style likely to captivate the working classes. Madame de Grantmesnil's first book was deemed an attack on the religion of the country, and captivated those among the working classes who had already abjured that religion. This work was followed up by others more or less in defiance of "received opinions;" some with political, some with social revolutionary aim and tendency, but always with a singular purity of style. Search all her books, and however you might revolt from her doctrine, you could not find a hazardous expression. The novels of English young ladies are naughty in comparison. Of late years, whatever might be hard or audacious in her political or social doctrines, softened itself into charm amid the golden haze of romance. Her writings had grown

more and more purely artistic—poetising what is good and beautiful in the realities of life, rather than creating a false ideal out of what is vicious and deformed. Such a woman, separated young from her husband, could not enunciate such opinions and lead a life so independent and uncontrolled as Madame de Grantmesnil had done, without scandal, without calumny. Nothing, however, in her actual life, had ever been so proved against her as to lower the high position she occupied in right of birth, fortune, renown. Wherever she went she was *fête*—as in England foreign princes, and in America foreign authors, are *fêlés*. Those who knew her well concurred in praise of her lofty, generous, lovable qualities. Madame de Grantmesnil had known Mr. Selby; and when, at his death, Isaura, in the innocent age between childhood and youth, had been left

the most sorrowful and most lonely creature on the face of the earth, this famous woman, worshipped by the rich for her intellect, adored by the poor for her beneficence, came to the orphan's friendless side, breathing love once more into her pining heart, and waking for the first time the desires of genius, the aspirations of art, in the dim self-consciousness of a soul between sleep and waking.

But, my dear Englishman, put yourself in Graham's place, and suppose that you were beginning to fall in love with a girl whom for many good reasons you ought not to marry; suppose that in the same hour in which you were angrily conscious of jealousy on account of a man whom it wounds your self-esteem to consider a rival, the girl tells you that her dearest friend is a woman who is famed for her hostility to the institution of marriage!

CHAPTER IV.

On the same day in which Graham dined with the Savarins, M. Louvier assembled round his table the *élite* of the young Parisians who constituted the oligarchy of fashion, to meet whom he had invited his new friend the Marquis de Rochebriant. Most of them belonged to the Legitimist party—the *noblesse* of the *faubourg*; those who did not, belonged to no political party at all,—indifferent to the cares of mortal states as the gods of Epicurus. Foremost among this *jeunesse dorée* were Alain's kinsmen, Raoul and Enguerrand de Vandemar. To these Louvier introduced him with a burly parental *bonhomie*, as if he were the head of the family. "I need not bid you, young folks, to make friends with each other. A Vandemar and a Rochebriant are not made friends—they are born

friends." So saying he turned to his other guests.

Almost in an instant Alain felt his constraint melt away in the cordial warmth with which his cousins greeted him.

These young men had a striking family likeness to each other, and yet in feature, colouring, and expression, in all save that strange family likeness, they were contrasts.

Raoul was tall, and though inclined to be slender, with sufficient breadth of shoulder to indicate no inconsiderable strength of frame. His hair worn short, and his silky beard worn long, were dark, so were his eyes, shaded by curved drooping lashes; his complexion was pale, but clear and healthful. In repose the expression of his face was that of a somewhat melancholy indolence, but in speaking it became

singularly sweet, with a smile of the exquisite urbanity which no artificial politeness can bestow; it must emanate from that native high breeding which has its source in goodness of heart.

Enguerrand was fair, with curly locks of a golden chestnut. He wore no beard, only a small moustache rather darker than his hair. His complexion might in itself be called effeminate, its bloom was so fresh and delicate, but there was so much of boldness and energy in the play of his countenance, the hardy outline of the lips, and the open breadth of the forehead, that "effeminate" was an epithet no one ever assigned to his aspect. He was somewhat under the middle height, but beautifully proportioned, carried himself well, and somehow or other did not look short even by the side of tall men. Altogether he seemed formed to be a mother's darling, and spoiled by women, yet to hold his own among men with a strength of will more evident in his look and his bearing than it was in those of his graver and statelier brother.

Both were considered by their young co-equals models in dress, but in Raoul there was no sign that care or thought upon dress had been bestowed; the simplicity of his costume was absolute and severe. On his plain shirt-front there gleamed not a stud, on his fingers there sparkled not a ring. Enguerrand, on the contrary, was not without pretension in his attire; the *broderie* in his shirt-front seemed woven by the Queen of the Fairies. His rings of turquoise and opal, his studs and wrist-buttons of pearl and brilliants, must have cost double the rental of Rochebriant, but probably they cost him nothing. He was one of those happy Lotharios to whom Calistas make constant presents.

All about him was so bright that the atmosphere around seemed gayer for his presence.

In one respect at least the brothers closely resembled each other—in that exquisite graciousness of manner for which the genuine French noble is traditionally renowned—a graciousness that did not desert them even when they came reluctantly into contact with *roturiers* or republicans; but the graciousness became *égalité, fraternité* towards one of their caste and kindred.

"We must do our best to make Paris pleasant to you," said Raoul, still retaining in his grasp the hand he had taken.

"*Vilain cousin*," said the livelier Enguerrand, "to have been in Paris twenty-four hours, and without letting us know."

"Has not your father told you that I called upon him?"

"Our father," answered Raoul, "was not so savage as to conceal that fact, but he said you were only here on business for a day or two, had declined his invitation, and would not give your address. *Pauvre père!* we scolded him well for letting you escape from us thus. My mother has not forgiven him yet; we must present you to her to-morrow. I answer for your liking her almost as much as she will like you."

Before Alain could answer dinner was announced. Alain's place at dinner was between his cousins. How pleasant they made themselves! it was the first time in which Alain had been brought into such familiar conversation with countrymen of his own rank as well as his own age. His heart warmed to them. The general talk of the other guests was strange to his ear; it ran much upon horses and races, upon the opera and the ballet; it was enlivened with satirical anecdotes of persons whose names were unknown to the Provincial—not a

word was said that showed the smallest interest in politics or the slightest acquaintance with literature. The world of these well-born guests seemed one from which all that concerned the great mass of mankind was excluded, yet the talk was that which could only be found in a very polished society; in it there was not much wit, but there was a prevalent vein of gaiety, and the gaiety was never violent, the laughter was never loud; the scandals circulated might imply cynicism the most absolute, but in language the most refined. The Jockey Club of Paris has its perfume.

Raoul did not mix in the general conversation; he devoted himself pointedly to the amusement of his cousin, explaining to him the point of the anecdotes circulated, or hitting off in terse sentences the characters of the talkers.

Enguerrand was evidently of temper more vivacious than his brother, and contributed freely to the current play of light gossip and mirthful sally.

Louvier, seated between a duke and a Russian prince, said little, except to recommend a wine or an *entrée*, but kept his eye constantly on the Vandemars and Alain.

Immediately after coffee the guests departed. Before they did so, however, Raoul introduced his cousin to those of the party most distinguished by hereditary rank or social position. With these the name of Rochebriant was too historically famous not to insure respect of its owner; they welcomed him among them as if he were their brother.

The French duke claimed him as

a connection by an alliance in the fourteenth century; the Russian prince had known the late Marquis, and "trusted that the son would allow him to improve into friendship the acquaintance he had formed with the father."

Those ceremonials over, Raoul linked his arm in Alain's, and said, "I am not going to release you so soon after we have caught you. You must come with me to a house in which I at least spend an hour or two every evening. I am at home there. Bah! I take no refusal. Do not suppose I carry you off to Bohemia, a country which, I am sorry to say, Enguerrand now and then visits, but which is to me as unknown as the mountains of the moon. The house I speak of is *comme il faut* to the utmost. It is that of the Contessa di Rimini—a charming Italian by marriage, but by birth and in character French—*jusqu'au bout des ongles*. My mother adores her."

That dinner at M. Louvier's had already effected a great change in the mood and temper of Alain de Rochebriant; he felt, as if by magic, the sense of youth, of rank, of station, which had been so suddenly checked and stifled, warmed to life within his veins. He should have deemed himself a boor had he refused the invitation so frankly tendered.

But on reaching the *coupé* which the brothers kept in common, and seeing it only held two, he drew back.

"Nay, enter, *mon cher*," said Raoul, divining the cause of his hesitation; "Enguerrand has gone on to his club."

CHAPTER V.

"Tell me," said Raoul, when they were in the carriage, "how you came to know M. Louvier?"

"He is my chief mortgagee."

"H'm! that explains it. But you might be in worse hands; the

man has a character for liberal-ity."

"Did your father mention to you my circumstances, and the reason that brings me to Paris?"

"Since you put the question point-blank, my dear cousin, he did."

"He told you how poor I am, and how keen must be my life-long struggle to keep Rochebriant as the home of my race."

"He told us all that could make us still more respect the Marquis de Rochebriant, and still more eagerly long to know our cousin and the head of our house," answered Raoul, with a certain nobleness of tone and manner.

Alain pressed his kinsman's hand with grateful emotion.

"Yet," he said, falteringly, "your father agreed with me that my circumstances would not allow me to——"

"Bah!" interrupted Raoul with a gentle laugh; "my father is a very clever man, doubtless, but he knows only the world of his own day, nothing of the world of ours. I and Enguerrand will call on you to-morrow, to take you to my mother, and before doing so, to consult as to affairs in general. On this last matter Enguerrand is an oracle. Here we are at the Contessa's."

CHAPTER VI.

The Contessa di Rimini received her visitors in a boudoir furnished with much apparent simplicity, but a simplicity by no means inexpensive. The draperies were but of chintz, and the walls covered with the same material, a lively pattern, in which the prevalent tints were rose-colour and white; but the ornaments on the mantelpiece, the china stored in the cabinets or arranged in the shelves, the small nicknacks scattered on the tables, were costly rarities of art.

The Contessa herself was a woman who had somewhat passed her thirtieth year, not strikingly handsome, but exquisitely pretty. "There is," said a great French writer, "only one way in which a woman can be handsome, but a hundred thousand ways in which she can be pretty;" and it would be impossible to reckon up the number of ways in which Adeline di Rimini carried off the prize in prettiness.

Yet it would be unjust to the personal attractions of the Contessa to class them all under the word prettiness." When regarded more

attentively, there was an expression in her countenance that might almost be called divine, it spoke so unmistakably of a sweet nature and an untroubled soul. An English poet once described her by repeating the old lines,—

"Her face is like the milky way i' the sky,—
A meeting of gentle lights without a name."

She was not alone; an elderly lady sate on an arm-chair by the fire, engaged in knitting, and a man, also elderly, and whose dress proclaimed him an ecclesiastic, sate at the opposite corner, with a large Angora cat on his lap.

"I present to you, Madame," said Raoul, "my new-found cousin, the seventeenth Marquis de Rochebriant, whom I am proud to consider, on the male side, the head of our house, representing its eldest branch: welcome him for my sake—in future he will be welcome for his own."

The Contessa replied very graciously to this introduction, and made room for Alain on the divan from which she had risen.

The old lady looked up from her knitting, the ecclesiastic removed the cat from his lap. Said the old lady, "I announce myself to M. le Marquis; I knew his mother well enough to be invited, to his christening; otherwise I have no pretension to the acquaintance of a cavalier *si beau*,—being old—rather deaf—very stupid—exceedingly poor—"

"And," interrupted Raoul, "the woman in all Paris, the most adored for *bonté*, and consulted for *savoir vivre* by the young cavaliers whom she deigns to receive. Alain, I present you to Madame de Maury, the widow of a distinguished author and academician, and the daughter of the brave Henri de Gerval, who fought for the good cause in La Vendée. I present you also to the Abbé Vertpré, who has passed his life in the vain endeavour to make other men as good as himself."

"Base flatterer!" said the Abbé, pinching Raoul's ear with one hand, while he extended the other to Alain. "Do not let your cousin frighten you from knowing me, M. le Marquis; when he was my pupil, he so convinced me of the incorrigibility of perverse human nature, that I now chiefly address myself to the moral improvement of the brute creation. Ask the Contessa if I have not achieved a *beau succès* with her Angora cat. Three months ago that creature had the two worst propensities of man. He was at once savage and mean; he bit, he stole. Does he ever bite now? No. Does he ever steal? No. Why? I have awakened in that cat the dormant conscience, and that done, the conscience regulates his actions: once made aware of the difference between wrong and right, the cat maintains it unswervingly, as if it were a law of nature. But if, with prodigious labour, one does awaken conscience in a human sinner, it has

no steady effect on his conduct—he continues to sin all the same. Mankind at Paris, Monsieur le Marquis, is divided between two classes—one bites and the other steals: shun both; devote yourself to cats."

The Abbé delivered his oration with a gravity of mien and tone which made it difficult to guess whether he spoke in sport or in earnest—in simple playfulness or with latent sarcasm.

But on the brow and in the eye of the priest there was a general expression of quiet benevolence, which made Alain incline to the belief that he was only speaking as a pleasant humorist; and the Marquis replied gaily—

"Monsieur l'Abbé, admitting the superior virtue of cats, when taught by so intelligent a preceptor, still the business of human life is not transacted by cats; and since men must deal with men, permit me, as a preliminary caution, to inquire in which class I must rank yourself. Do you bite or do you steal?"

This sally, which showed that the Marquis was already shaking off his provincial reserve, met with great success.

Raoul and the Contessa laughed merrily; Madame de Maury clapped her hands, and cried "*Bien!*"

The Abbé replied, with unmoved gravity, "Both. I am a priest; it is my duty to bite the bad and steal from the good, as you will see, M. le Marquis, if you will glance at this paper."

Here he handed to Alain a memorial on behalf of an afflicted family who had been burnt out of their home, and reduced from comparative ease to absolute want. There was a list appended of some twenty subscribers, the last being the Contessa, fifty francs, and Madame de Maury five.

"Allow me, Marquis," said the Abbé, "to steal from you; bless you

twofold, *mon fils*!" (taking the napoleon Alain extended to him)—"first, for your charity—secondly, for the effect of its example upon the heart of your cousin. Raoul de Vandemar, stand and deliver. Bah!—what! only ten francs."

Raoul made a sign to the Abbé, unperceived by the rest, as he answered, "Abbé, I should excel your expectations of my career if I always continue worth half as much as my cousin."

Alain felt to the bottom of his heart the delicate tact of his richer kinsman in giving less than himself, and the Abbé replied, "Niggard, you are pardoned. Humility is a more difficult virtue to produce than charity, and in your case an instance of it is so rare that it merits encouragement."

The "tea equipage" was now served in what at Paris is called the English fashion; the Contessa presided over it, the guests gathered round the

table, and the evening passed away in the innocent gaiety of a domestic circle. The talk, if not especially intellectual, was at least not fashionable — books were not discussed, neither were scandals; yet somehow or other it was cheery and animated, like that of a happy family in a country-house. Alain thought still the better of Raoul that, Parisian though he was, he could appreciate the charm of an evening so innocently spent.

On taking leave, the Contessa gave Alain a general invitation to drop in whenever he was not better engaged.

"I except only the opera nights," said she. "My husband has gone to Milan on his affairs, and during his absence I do not go to parties; the opera I cannot resist."

Raoul set Alain down at his lodgings. "*Au revoir*; to-morrow at one o'clock expect Enguerrand and myself."

CHAPTER VII.

Raoul and Enguerrand called on Alain at the hour fixed.

"In the first place," said Raoul, "I must beg you to accept my mother's regrets that she cannot receive you to-day. She and the Contessa belong to a society of ladies formed for visiting the poor, and this is their day; but to-morrow you must dine with us *en famille*. Now to business. Allow me to light my cigar while you confide the whole state of affairs to Enguerrand: whatever he counsels, I am sure to approve."

Alain, as briefly as he could, stated his circumstances, his mortgages, and the hopes which his *avoué* had encouraged him to place in the friendly disposition of M. Louvier. When he had concluded, Enguerrand mused for a few mo-

ments before replying. At last he said, "Will you trust me to call on Louvier on your behalf? I shall but inquire if he is inclined to take on himself the other mortgages; and if so, on what terms. Our relationship gives me the excuse for my interference; and to say truth, I have had much familiar intercourse with the man. I too am a speculator, and have often profited by Louvier's advice. You may ask what can be his object in serving me; he can gain nothing by it. To this I answer, the key to his good offices is in his character. Audacious though he be as a speculator, he is wonderfully prudent as a politician. This *belle France* of ours is like a stage tumbler; one can never be sure whether it will stand on its head or its feet. Louvier very wisely wishes

to feel himself safe whatever party comes uppermost. He has no faith in the duration of the Empire; and as, at all events, the Empire will not confiscate his millions, he takes no trouble in conciliating Imperialists. But on the principle which induces certain savages to worship the devil and neglect the *bon Dieu*, because the devil is spiteful and the *bon Dieu* is too beneficent to injure them, Louvier, at heart detesting as well as dreading a republic, lays himself out to secure friends with the Republicans of all classes, and pretends to espouse their cause. Next to them he is very conciliatory to the Orleanists. Lastly, though he thinks the Legitimists have no chance, he desires to keep well with the nobles of that party, because they exercise a considerable influence over that sphere of opinion which belongs to fashion; for fashion is never powerless in Paris. Raoul and myself are no mean authorities in *salons* and clubs; and a good word from us is worth having.

"Besides, Louvier himself in his youth set up for a dandy; and that deposed ruler of dandies, our unfortunate kinsman, Victor de Mauléon, shed some of his own radiance on the money-lender's son. But when Victor's star was eclipsed, Louvier ceased to gleam. The dandies cut him. In his heart he exults that the dandies now throng to his *soirées*. *Bref*, the *millionnaire* is especially civil to me—the more so as I know intimately two or three eminent journalists; and Louvier takes pains to plant garrisons in the press. I trust I have explained the grounds on which I may be a better diplomatist to employ than your *avoué*; and with your leave I will go to Louvier at once."

"Let him go," said Raoul. "Enguerrand never fails in anything he undertakes, especially," he added, with a smile half sad, half

tender, "when one wishes to replenish one's purse."

"I, too, gratefully grant such an ambassador all powers to treat," said Alain. "I am only ashamed to consign to him a post so much beneath his genius," and 'his birth' he was about to add, but wisely checked himself. Enguerrand said, shrugging his shoulders, "You can't do me a greater kindness than by setting my wits at work. I fall a martyr to *ennui*, when I am not in action," he said, and was gone.

"It makes me very melancholy at times," said Raoul, flinging away the end of his cigar, "to think that a man so clever and so energetic as Enguerrand should be as much excluded from the service of his country as if he were an Iroquois Indian. He would have made a great diplomatist."

"Alas!" replied Alain, with a sigh, "I begin to doubt whether we Legitimists are justified in maintaining a useless loyalty to a sovereign who renders us morally exiles in the land of our birth."

"I have no doubt on the subject," said Raoul. "We are not justified on the score of policy, but we have no option at present on the score of honour. We should gain so much for ourselves if we adopted the State livery and took the State wages that no man would esteem us as patriots; we should only be despised as apostates. So long as Henry V. lives, and does not resign his claim, we cannot be active citizens; we must be mournful lookers-on. But what matters it? We nobles of the old race are becoming rapidly extinct. Under any form of government likely to be established in France we are equally doomed. The French people, aiming at an impossible equality, will never again tolerate a race of *gentilshommes*. They cannot prevent, without de-

stroying commerce and capital altogether, a quick succession of men of the day, who form nominal aristocracies much more opposed to equality than any hereditary class of nobles. But they refuse these fleeting substitutes of born patricians all permanent stake in the country, since whatever estate they buy must be subdivided at their death. My poor Alain, you are making it the one ambition of your life to preserve to your posterity the home and lands of your forefathers. How is that possible, even supposing you could redeem the mortgages? You marry some day—you have children, and Rochebriant must then be sold to pay for their separate portions. How this condition of things, while rendering us so ineffective to perform the normal functions of a *noblesse* in public life, affects us in private life, may be easily conceived.

"Condemned to a career of pleasure and frivolity, we can scarcely escape from the contagion of extravagant luxury which forms the vice of the time. With grand names to keep up, and small fortunes whereon to keep them, we readily incur embarrassment and debt. Then neediness conquers pride. We cannot be great merchants, but we can be small gamblers on the Bourse, or, thanks to the *Crédit Mobilier*, imitate a cabinet minister, and keep a shop under another name. Perhaps you have heard that Enguerrand and I keep a shop. Pray, buy your gloves there. Strange fate for men whose ancestors fought in the first Crusade—*mais que voulez vous?*"

"I was told of the shop," said Alain, "but the moment I knew you I disbelieved the story."

"Quite true. Shall I confide to you why we resorted to that means of finding ourselves in pocket-money?

My father gives us rooms in his hotel; the use of his table, which we do not much profit by; and an allowance, on which we could not live as young men of our class live at Paris. Enguerrand had his means of spending pocket-money, I mine; but it came to the same thing—the pockets were emptied. We incurred debts. Two years ago my father straitened himself to pay them, saying, 'The next time you come to me with debts, however small, you must pay them yourselves, or you must marry, and leave it to me to find you wives.' This threat appalled us both. A month afterwards, Enguerrand made a lucky hit at the Bourse, and proposed to invest the proceeds in a shop. I resisted as long as I could, but Enguerrand triumphed over me, as he always does. He found an excellent deputy in a *bonne* who had nursed us in childhood, and married a journeyman perfumer who understands the business. It answers well; we are not in debt, and we have preserved our freedom."

After these confessions Raoul went away, and Alain fell into a mournful reverie, from which he was roused by a loud ring at his bell. He opened the door, and beheld M. Louvier. The burly financier was much out of breath after making so steep an ascent. It was in gasps that he muttered, "*Bon jour*; excuse me if I derange you." Then entering and seating himself on a chair, he took some minutes to recover speech, rolling his eyes staringly round the meagre, unluxurious room, and then concentrating their gaze upon its occupier.

"*Peste*, my dear Marquis!" he said at last; "I hope the next time I visit you the ascent may be less arduous. One would think you were in training to ascend the Himalaya."

The haughty noble writhed under this jest, and the spirit inborn in his order spoke in his answer.

"I am accustomed to dwell on heights, M. Louvier; the castle of Rochebriant is not on a level with the town."

An angry gleam shot from the eyes of the *millionnaire*, but there was no other sign of displeasure in his answer.

"*Bien dit, mon cher*: how you remind me of your father! Now, give me leave to speak on affairs. I have seen your cousin Enguerrand de Vandemar. *Homme de moyens* though *joli garçon*. He proposed that you should call on me. I said 'no' to the *cher petit* Enguerrand—a visit from me was due to you. To cut matters short, M. Gandrin has allowed me to look into your papers. I was disposed to serve you from the first—I am still more disposed to serve you now. I undertake to pay off all your other mortgages, and become sole mortgagee, and on terms that I have jotted down on this paper, and which I hope will content you."

He placed a paper in Alain's hand, and took out a box, from which he extracted a jujube, placed it in his mouth, folded his hands, and reclined back in his chair, with his eyes half closed, as if exhausted alike by his ascent and his generosity.

In effect, the terms were unexpectedly liberal. The reduced interest on the mortgages would leave the Marquis an income of £1000 a-year instead of £400. Louvier proposed to take on himself the legal cost of transfer, and to pay to the Marquis 25,000 francs on the completion of the deed as a bonus. The mortgage did not exempt the building-land, as Hébert desired. In all else it was singularly advantageous, and Alain could but feel a thrill of grateful delight at an offer by which his stinted income was raised to comparative affluence.

"Well, Marquis," said Louvier, "what does the castle say to the town?"

"M. Louvier," answered Alain, extending his hand with cordial eagerness, "accept my sincere apologies for the indiscretion of my metaphor. Poverty is proverbially sensitive to jests on it. I owe it to you if I cannot hereafter make that excuse for any words of mine that may displease you. The terms you propose are most liberal, and I close with them at once."

"*Bon*," said Louvier, shaking vehemently the hand offered to him; "I will take the paper to Gandrin, and instruct him accordingly. And now, may I attach a condition to the agreement which is not put down on paper? It may have surprised you perhaps that I should propose a gratuity of 25,000 francs on completion of the contract. It is a droll thing to do, and not in the ordinary way of business, therefore I must explain. Marquis, pardon the liberty I take, but you have inspired me with an interest in your future. With your birth, connections, and figure, you should push your way in the world far and fast. But you can't do so in a province. You must find your opening at Paris. I wish you to spend a year in the capital, and live, not extravagantly, like a *nouveau riche*, but in a way not unsuited to your rank, and permitting you all the social advantages that belong to it. These 25,000 francs, in addition to your improved income, will enable you to gratify my wish in this respect. Spend the money in Paris: you will want every *sou* of it in the course of the year. It will be money well spent. Take my advice, *cher Marquis*. *Au plaisir*."

The financier bowed himself out. The young Marquis forgot all the mournful reflections with which Raoul's conversation had inspired

him. He gave a new touch to his toilet, and sallied forth with the air of a man on whose morning of life a sun heretofore clouded has burst forth and transformed the face of the landscape.

CHAPTER VIII.

Since the evening spent at the Savarins' Graham had seen no more of Isaura. He had avoided all chance of seeing her—in fact, the jealousy with which he had viewed her manner towards Rameau, and the angry amaze with which he had heard her proclaim her friendship for Madame de Grantmesnil, served to strengthen the grave and secret reasons which made him desire to keep his heart yet free and his hand yet unpledged. But, alas! the heart was enslaved already. It was under the most fatal of all spells—first love conceived at first sight. He was wretched; and in his wretchedness his resolves became involuntarily weakened. He found himself making excuses for the beloved. What cause had he, after all, for that jealousy of the young poet which had so offended him? and if, in her youth and inexperience, Isaura had made her dearest friend of a great writer by whose genius she might be dazzled, and of whose opinions she might scarcely be aware, was it a crime that necessitated her eternal banishment from the reverence which belongs to all manly love? Certainly he found no satisfactory answers to such self-questionings. And then those grave reasonings known only to himself, and never to be confided to another—why he should yet reserve his hand unpledged—were not so imperative as to admit of no compromise. They might entail a sacrifice, and not a small one to a man of Graham's views and ambition. But what is love if it can think any sacrifice, short of duty and honour, too great to offer up unknown, un-

comprehended, to the one beloved? Still, while thus softened in his feelings towards Isaura, he became, perhaps in consequence of such softening, more and more restlessly impatient to fulfil the object for which he had come to Paris, the great step towards which was the discovery of the undiscoverable Louise Duval.

He had written more than once to M. Renard since the interview with that functionary already recorded, demanding whether Renard had not made some progress in the research on which he was employed, and had received short unsatisfactory replies preaching patience and implying hope.

The plain truth, however, was, that M. Renard had taken no further pains in the matter. He considered it utter waste of time and thought to attempt a discovery to which the traces were so faint and so obsolete. If the discovery were effected, it must be by one of those chances which occur without labour or forethought of our own. He trusted only to such a chance in continuing the charge he had undertaken. But during the last day or two Graham had become yet more impatient than before, and peremptorily requested another visit from this dilatory confidant.

In that visit, finding himself pressed hard, and though naturally willing, if possible, to retain a client unusually generous, yet being, on the whole, an honest member of his profession, and feeling it to be somewhat unfair to accept large remuneration for doing nothing, M. Renard said frankly, "Monsieur, this affair is beyond me; the keen-

est agent of our police could make nothing of it. Unless you can tell me more than you have done, I am utterly without a clue. I resign, therefore, the task with which you honoured me, willing to resume it again if you can give me information that could render me of use."

"What sort of information?"

"At least the names of some of the lady's relations who may yet be living."

"But it strikes me that, if I could get at that piece of knowledge, I should not require the services of the police. The relations would tell me what had become of Louise Duval quite as readily as they would tell a police agent."

"Quite true, Monsieur. It would really be picking your pockets if I did not at once retire from your service. Nay, Monsieur, pardon me, no further payments; I have already accepted too much. Your most obedient servant."

Graham, left alone, fell into a very gloomy reverie. He could not but be sensible of the difficulties in the way of the object which had brought him to Paris, with somewhat sanguine expectations of success founded on a belief in the omniscience of the Parisian police, which is only to be justified when they have to deal with a murderess or a political incendiary. But the name of Louise Duval is about as common in France as that of Mary Smith in England; and the English reader may judge what would be the likely result of inquiring through the ablest of our detectives after some Mary Smith of whom you could give little more information than that she was the daughter of a drawing-master who had died twenty years ago, that it was about fifteen years since anything had been heard of her, and that you could not say if, through marriage or for other reasons, she had changed her name or not, and you

had reasons for declining recourse to public advertisements. In the course of inquiry so instituted, the probability would be that you might hear of a great many Mary Smiths, in the pursuit of whom your *employé* would lose all sight and scent of the one Mary Smith for whom the chase was instituted.

In the midst of Graham's despairing reflections his *laquais* announced M. Frederic Lemercier.

"*Cher Gram-Varn.* A thousand pardons if I disturb you at this late hour of the evening; but you remember the request you made me when you first arrived in Paris this season?"

"Of course I do—in case you should ever chance in your wide round of acquaintances to fall in with a Madame or Mademoiselle Duval of about the age of forty, or a year or so less, to let me know: and you did fall in with two ladies of that name, but they were not the right one—not the person whom my friend begged me to discover—both much too young."

"*Eh bien, mon cher.* If you will come with me to *le bal champêtre* in the Champs Elysées to-night, I can show you a third Madame Duval; her Christian name is Louise, too, of the age you mention—though she does her best to look younger, and is still very handsome. You said your Duval was handsome. It was only last evening that I met this lady at a *soirée* given by Mademoiselle Julie Caumartin, *coryphée distinguée*, in love with young Rameau."

"In love with young Rameau? I am very glad to hear it. He returns the love?"

"I suppose so. He seems very proud of it. But *à propos* of Madame Duval, she has been long absent from Paris—just returned—and looking out for conquests. She says she has a great *penchant* for the

English; promises me to be at this ball—come."

"Hearty thanks, my dear Lemercier. I am at your service."

CHAPTER IX.

The *bal champêtre* was gay and brilliant, as such festal scenes are at Paris. A lovely night in the midst of May—lamps below and stars above: the society mixed, of course. Evidently, when Graham had singled out Frederic Lemercier from all his acquaintances at Paris, to conjoin with the official aid of M. Renard in search of the mysterious lady, he had conjectured the probability that she might be found in the Bohemian world so familiar to Frederic; if not as an inhabitant, at least as an explorer. Bohemia was largely represented at the *bal champêtre*, but not without a fair sprinkling of what we call the "respectable classes," especially English and Americans, who brought their wives there to take care of them. Frenchmen, not needing such care, prudently left their wives at home. Among the Frenchmen of station were the Comte de Passy and the Vicomte de Brézé.

On first entering the gardens, Graham's eye was attracted and dazzled by a brilliant form. It was standing under a festoon of flowers extended from tree to tree, and a gas jet opposite shone full upon the face—the face of a girl in all the freshness of youth. If the freshness owed anything to art, the art was so well disguised that it seemed nature. The beauty of the countenance was Hebe-like, joyous, and radiant, and yet one could not look at the girl without a sentiment of deep mournfulness. She was surrounded by a group of young men, and the ring of her laugh jarred upon Graham's ear. He pressed Frederic's arm, and directing his attention to the girl, asked who she was.

"Who? Don't you know? That is Julie Caumartin. A little while ago her equipage was the most admired in the Bois, and great ladies condescended to copy her dress or her *coiffure*. But she has lost her splendour, and dismissed the rich admirer who supplied the fuel for its blaze, since she fell in love with Gustave Rameau. Doubtless she is expecting him to-night. You ought to know her; shall I present you?"

"No," answered Graham, with a compassionate expression in his manly face. "So young; seemingly so gay. How I pity her!"

"What! for throwing herself away on Rameau? True. There is a great deal of good in her girl's nature, if she had been properly trained. Rameau wrote a pretty poem on her which turned her head and won her heart, in which she is styled the 'Ondine of Paris,'—a nymph-like type of Paris itself."

"Vanishing type, like her namesake; born of the spray, and vanishing soon into the deep," said Graham. "Pray go and look for the Duval; you will find me seated yonder."

Graham passed into a retired alley, and threw himself on a solitary bench, while Lemercier went in search of Madame Duval. In a few minutes the Frenchman reappeared. By his side was a lady well dressed, and as she passed under the lamps Graham perceived that, though of a certain age, she was undeniably handsome. His heart beat more quickly. Surely this was the Louise Duval he sought.

He rose from his seat, and was presented in due form to the lady,

with whom Frederic then discreetly left him.

"Monsieur Lemer cier tells me that you think that we were once acquainted with each other."

"Nay, Madame; I should not fail to recognise you were that the case. A friend of mine had the honour of knowing a lady of your name; and should I be fortunate enough to meet that lady, I am charged with a commission that may not be unwelcome to her. M. Lemer cier tells me your *nom de baptême* is Louise."

"Louise Corinne, Monsieur."

"And I presume that Duval is the name you take from your parents."

"No; my father's name was Bernard. I married, when I was a mere child, M. Duval, in the wine trade at Bordeaux."

"Ah, indeed!" said Graham, much disappointed, but looking at her with a keen, searching eye, which she met with a decided frankness. Evidently, in his judgment, she was speaking the truth.

"You know English, I think, Madame," he resumed, addressing her in that language.

"A leetle—speak *un peu*."

"Only a little?"

Madame Duval looked puzzled, and replied in French, with a laugh, "Is it that you were told that I spoke English by your countryman, Milord Sare Boulby? *Petit scélérat*, I hope he is well. He sends you a commission for me—so he ought: he behaved to me like a monster."

"Alas! I know nothing of my lord Sir Boulby. Were you never in England yourself?"

"Never"—with a coquettish side glance—"I should like so much to go. I have a foible for the English in spite of that *vilain petit* Boulby. Who is it gave you the commission for me? Ha! I guess—le Capitaine Nelton."

"No. What year, Madame, if not impertinent, were you at Aix-la-Chapelle?"

"You mean Baden? I was there seven years ago, when I met le Capitaine Nelton—*bel homme aux cheveux rouges*."

"But you have been at Aix?"

"Never."

"I have, then, been mistaken, Madame, and have only to offer my most humble apologies."

"But perhaps you will favour me with a visit, and we may on further conversation find that you are not mistaken. I can't stay now, for I am engaged to dance with the Belgian of whom, no doubt, M. Lemer cier has told you."

"No, Madame, he has not."

"Well, then, he will tell you. The Belgian is very jealous. But I am always at home between three and four. This is my card."

Graham eagerly took the card, and exclaimed, "Is this your own handwriting, Madame?"

"Yes, indeed."

"*Très belle écriture*," said Graham, and receded with a ceremonious bow. "Anything so unlike *her* handwriting. Another disappointment," muttered the Englishman, as the lady went back to the ball.

A few minutes later Graham joined Lemer cier, who was talking with De Passy and De Brézé.

"Well," said Lemer cier, when his eye rested on Graham, "I hit the right nail on the head this time, eh?"

Graham shook his head.

"What! Is she not the right Louise Duval?"

"Certainly not."

The Count de Passy overheard the name, and turned. "Louise Duval," he said; "does Mons. Vane know a Louise Duval?"

"No; but a friend asked me to inquire after a lady of that name whom he had met many years

ago at Paris." The Count mused a moment, and said, "Is it possible that your friend knew the family De Mauléon?"

"I really can't say; what then?"

"The old Vicomte de Mauléon was one of my most intimate associates. In fact, our houses are connected. And he was extremely grieved, poor man, when his daughter Louise married her drawing-master, Auguste Duval."

"Her drawing-master, Auguste Duval? Pray say on. I think the Louise Duval my friend knew must have been her daughter. She was the only child of a drawing-master or artist named Auguste Duval, and probably enough her Christian name would have been derived from her mother. A Mademoiselle de Mauléon, then, married M. Auguste Duval?"

"Yes; the old Vicomte had espoused *en premières nocés* Mademoiselle Camille de Chavigny, a lady of birth equal to his own—had by her one daughter, Louise. I recollect her well,—a plain girl, with a high nose and a sour expression. She was just of age when the first Vicomtesse died, and by the marriage settlement she succeeded at once to her mother's fortune, which was not large. The Vicomte was, however, so poor that the loss of that income was no trifle to him. Though past fifty, he was still very handsome. Men of that generation did not age soon, Monsieur," said the Count, expanding his fine chest and laughing exultingly.

"He married, *en secondes nocés*, a lady of still higher birth than the first, and with a much better *dot*. Louise was indignant at this, hated her stepmother; and when a son was born by the second marriage she left the paternal roof, went to reside with an old female relative near the Luxembourg, and there married this drawing-master. Her

father and the family did all they could to prevent it; but in these democratic days a woman who has attained her majority can, if she persist in her determination, marry to please herself and disgrace her ancestors. After that *mésalliance* her father never would see her again. I tried in vain to soften him. All his parental affections settled on his handsome Victor. Ah! you are too young to have known Victor de Mauléon during his short reign at Paris—as *roi des viveurs*."

"Yes, he was before my time; but I have heard of him as a young man of great fashion—said to be very clever, a duellist, and a sort of Don Juan."

"Exactly."

"And then I remember vaguely to have heard that he committed, or was said to have committed, some villanous action connected with a great lady's jewels, and to have left Paris in consequence."

"Ah, yes—a sad scrape. At that time there was a political crisis; we were under a Republic; anything against a noble was believed. But I am sure Victor de Mauléon was not the man to commit a larceny. However, it is quite true that he left Paris, and I don't know what has become of him since." Here he touched De Brézé, who, though still near, had not been listening to this conversation, but interchanging jest and laughter with Lemercier on the motley scene of the dance.

"De Brézé, have you ever heard what became of poor dear Victor de Mauléon?—you knew him."

"Knew him? I should think so. Who could be in the great world and not know *le beau* Victor? No; after he vanished I never heard more of him,—doubtless, long since dead. A good-hearted fellow in spite of all his sins."

"My dear M. de Brézé, did you

know his half-sister?" asked Graham—"a Madame Duval?"

"No; I never heard he had a half-sister. Halt there: I recollect that I met Victor once in the garden at Versailles, walking arm-in-arm with the most beautiful girl I ever saw; and when I complimented him afterwards at the Jockey Club on his new conquest, he replied very gravely that the young lady was his niece. 'Niece!' said I; 'why, there can't be more than five or six years between you.' 'About that, I suppose,' said he; 'my half-sister, her mother, was more than twenty years older than I at the time of my birth.' I doubted the truth of his story at the time; but since you say he really had a sister, my doubt wronged him."

"Have you never seen this same young lady since?"

"Never."

"How many years ago was this?"

"Let me see—about twenty or

twenty-one years ago. How time flies!"

Graham still continued to question, but could learn no further particulars. He turned to quit the gardens just as the band was striking up for a fresh dance, a wild German waltz air, and mingled with that German music his ear caught the sprightly sounds of the French laugh, one laugh distinguished from the rest by a more genuine ring of light-hearted joy—the laugh that he had heard on entering the gardens, and the sound of which had then saddened him. Looking toward the quarter from which it came, he again saw the 'Ondine of Paris.' She was not now the centre of a group. She had just found Gustave Rameau; and was clinging to his arm with a look of happiness in her face, frank and innocent as a child's. And so they passed amid the dancers down a solitary lamp-lit alley, till lost to the Englishman's lingering gaze.

CHAPTER X.

The next morning Graham sent again for M. Renard.

"Well," he cried, when that dignitary appeared and took a seat beside him; "chance has favoured me."

"I always counted on chance, Monsieur. Chance has more wit in its little finger than the Paris police in its whole body."

"I have ascertained the relations, on the mother's side, of Louise Duval, and the only question is how to get at them."

Here Graham related what he had heard, and ended by saying, "This Victor de Mauléon is therefore my Louise Duval's uncle. He was, no doubt, taking charge of her in the year that the persons interested in her discovery lost sight of her in Paris; and surely he must know what became of her afterwards."

"Very probably; and chance may befriend us yet in the discovery of Victor de Mauléon. You seem not to know the particulars of that story about the jewels which brought him into some connection with the police and resulted in his disappearance from Paris."

"No; tell me the particulars."

"Victor de Mauléon was heir to some 60,000 or 70,000 francs a-year, chiefly on the mother's side; for his father, though the representative of one of the most ancient houses in France, was very poor, having little of his own except the emoluments of an appointment in the court of Louis Philippe.

"But before, by the death of his parents, Victor came into that inheritance, he very largely forestalled it. His tastes were magnificent. He

took to 'sport'—kept a famous stud, was a great favourite with the English, and spoke their language fluently. Indeed he was considered very accomplished, and of considerable intellectual powers. It was generally said that some day or other, when he had sown his wild oats, he would, if he took to politics, be an eminent man. Altogether he was a very strong creature. That was a very strong age under Louis Philippe. The *viteurs* of Paris were fine types for the heroes of Dumas and Sue—full of animal life and spirits. Victor de Mauléon was a romance of Dumas—incarnated."

"M. Renard, forgive me that I did not before do justice to your taste in polite literature."

"Monsieur, a man in my profession does not attain even to my humble eminence if he be not something else than a professional. He must study mankind wherever they are described—even in *les romans*. To return to Victor de Mauléon. Though he was a 'sportman,' a gambler, a Don Juan, a duellist, nothing was ever said against his honour. On the contrary, on matters of honour he was a received oracle; and even though he had fought several duels (that was the age of duels), and was reported without a superior, almost without an equal, in either weapon—the sword or the pistol—he is said never to have wantonly provoked an encounter, and to have so used his skill that he contrived never to slay, nor even gravely to wound, an antagonist."

"I remember one instance of his generosity in this respect, for it was much talked of at the time. One of your countrymen, who had never handled a fencing-foil nor fired a pistol, took offence at something M. de Mauléon had said in disparagement of the Duke of Wellington, and called him out. Victor de Mau-

léon accepted the challenge, discharged his pistol, not in the air—that might have been an affront—but so as to be wide of the mark, walked up to the lines to be shot at, and when missed, said, 'Excuse the susceptibility of a Frenchman—loath to believe that his countrymen can be beaten save by accident, and accept every apology one gentleman can make to another for having forgotten the respect due to one of the most renowned of your national heroes.' The Englishman's name was Vane. Could it have been your father?"

"Very probably; just like my father to call out any man who insulted the honour of his country, as represented by its men. I hope the two combatants became friends?"

"That I never heard; the duel was over—there my story ends."

"Pray go on."

"One day—it was in the midst of political events which would have silenced most subjects of private gossip—the *beau monde* was startled by the news that the Vicomte (he was then, by his father's death, Vicomte) de Mauléon had been given into the custody of the police on the charge of stealing the jewels of the Duchesse de — (the wife of a distinguished foreigner). It seems that some days before this event the Duc, wishing to make Madame his spouse an agreeable surprise, had resolved to have a diamond necklace belonging to her, and which was of setting so old-fashioned that she had not lately worn it, reset for her birthday. He therefore secretly possessed himself of the key to an iron safe in a cabinet adjoining her dressing-room (in which safe her more valuable jewels were kept), and took from it the necklace. Imagine his dismay when the jeweller in the Rue Vivienne to whom he carried it, recognised the pretended diamonds as imitation paste which he himself

had some days previously inserted into an empty setting brought to him by a Monsieur with whose name he was unacquainted. The Duchesse was at that time in delicate health; and as the Duc's suspicions naturally fell on the servants, especially on the *femme de chambre*, who was in great favour with his wife, he did not like to alarm Madame, nor through her to put the servants on their guard. He resolved, therefore, to place the matter in the hands of the famous * * *, who was then the pride and ornament of the Parisian police. And the very night afterwards the Vicomte de Mauléon was caught and apprehended in the cabinet where the jewels were kept, and to which he had got access by a false key, or at least a duplicate key, found in his possession. I should observe that M. de Mauléon occupied the *entresol* in the same hotel in which the upper rooms were devoted to the Duc and Duchesse and their suite. As soon as this charge against the Vicomte was made known (and it was known the next morning), the extent of his debts and the utterness of his ruin (before scarcely conjectured or wholly unheeded), became public through the medium of the journals, and furnished an obvious motive for the crime of which he was accused. We Parisians, Monsieur, are subject to the most startling reactions of feeling. The men we adore one day we execrate the next. The Vicomte passed at once from the popular admiration one bestows on a hero, to the popular contempt with which one regards a petty larcener. Society wondered how it had ever condescended to receive into its bosom the gambler, the duellist, the Don Juan. However, one compensation in the way of amusement he might still afford to society for the grave injuries he had done it. Society would attend his trial, witness his demean-

nour at the bar, and watch the expression of his face when he was sentenced to the galleys. But, Monsieur, this wretch completed the measure of his iniquities. He was not tried at all. The Duc and Duchesse quitted Paris for Spain, and the Duc instructed his lawyer to withdraw his charge, stating his conviction of the Vicomte's complete innocence of any other offence than that which he himself had confessed."

"What did the Vicomte confess? you omitted to state that."

"The Vicomte, when apprehended, confessed that, smitten by an insane passion for the Duchesse, which she had, on his presuming to declare it, met with indignant scorn, he had taken advantage of his lodgment in the same house to admit himself into the cabinet adjoining her dressing-room by means of a key which he had procured made from an impression of the key-hole taken in wax.

"No evidence in support of any other charge against the Vicomte was forthcoming—nothing, in short, beyond the *infraction du domicile* caused by the madness of youthful love and for which there was no prosecution. The law, therefore, could have little to say against him. But society was more rigid; and, exceedingly angry to find that a man who had been so conspicuous for luxury should prove to be a pauper, insisted on believing that M. de Mauléon was guilty of the meaner, though not perhaps, in the eyes of husbands and fathers, the more heinous of the two offences. I presume that the Vicomte felt that he had got into a dilemma from which no pistol-shot or sword-thrust could free him, for he left Paris abruptly, and has not since reappeared. The sale of his stud and effects sufficed, I believe, to pay his debts, for I will do him the justice to say that they were paid."

"But though the Vicomte de Mauléon has disappeared, he must have left relations at Paris, who would perhaps know what has become of him and of his niece."

"I doubt it. He had no very near relations. The nearest was an old *célibataire* of the same name, from whom he had some expectations, but who died shortly after this *esclandre*, and did not name the Vicomte in his will. M. Victor had numerous connections among the highest families—the Rochebriants, Chavignys, Vandemars, Beauvilliers. But they are not likely to have retained any connection with a ruined *vaurien*, and still less with a niece of his who was the child of a drawing-master. But now you have given me a clue, I will try to follow it up. We must find the Vicomte, and I am not without hope of doing so. Pardon me if I decline to say more at present. I would not raise false expectations. But in a week or two I will have the honor to call again upon Monsieur."

"Wait one instant. You have really a hope of discovering M. de Mauléon?"

"Yes. I cannot say more at present."

M. Renard departed.

Still that hope, however faint it might prove, served to reanimate Graham; and with that hope his heart, as if a load had been lifted from its mainspring, returned instinctively to the thought of Isaura. Whatever seemed to promise an early discharge of the commission connected with the discovery of

Louise Duval seemed to bring Isaura nearer to him, or at least to excuse his yearning desire to see more of her—to understand her better. Faded into thin air was the vague jealousy of Gustave Rameau which he had so unreasonably conceived; he felt as if it were impossible that the man whom the 'Ondine of Paris' claimed as her lover could dare to woo or hope to win an Isaura. He even forgot the friendship with the eloquent denouncer of the marriage-bond, which a little while ago had seemed to him an unpardonable offence; he remembered only the lovely face, so innocent, yet so intelligent; only the sweet voice which had for the first time breathed music into his own soul; only the gentle hand whose touch had for the first time sent through his veins the thrill which distinguishes from all her sex the woman whom we love. He went forth elated and joyous, and took his way to Isaura's villa. As he went, the leaves on the trees under which he passed seemed stirred by the soft May breeze in sympathy with his own delight. Perhaps it was rather the reverse: his own silent delight sympathised with all delight in awakening nature. The lover seeking reconciliation with the loved one from whom some trifle has unreasonably estranged him, in a cloudless day of May,—if he be not happy enough to feel a brotherhood in all things happy—a leaf in bloom, a bird in song—then indeed he may call himself lover, but he does not know what is love.

A CENTURY OF GREAT POETS, FROM 1750 DOWNWARDS.

NO. VIII.—JOHANN WOLFGANG GOETHE.

It must always be a great deal more difficult to estimate justly and understand fully the power and gift of a poet whose works are in a foreign language than to appreciate the singers whose tongue is our own. A great deal of the absolute essence and soul of poetry evaporates in the very best translation; and all its most subtle graces are apt to elude the student who reads by the help of dictionaries and grammars. In this particular, above all others, is made visible the influence of that little audience of cultivated readers who stand between the poet and the ordinary public, impressing often by but slow degrees their judgment and opinion upon the less-informed intelligences that take from them their cue. There is no poetic name within the last hundred years which has won a higher place than that of Goethe—we might indeed say, and with some truth, has won so high a place; and yet how few is the number of ordinary English readers who know Goethe in anything but the most superficial and accidental way! A translation of 'Faust,' taken up impartially, without scrutiny into its rank—the most indifferent being as likely as the best; a remembered glance, twenty years ago, for those of us who are old enough, into Carlyle's 'Wilhelm Meister;' a vague traditionary recollection of Werter, with perhaps the Erl-king, as a very great refinement of knowledge, to crown the information—about so much of Goethe, but no more, may be supposed to be generally known to the English reader. And yet even the uninstructed reader, thus meagrely informed, recognises the greatness of the name, and does a sort of homage, mingled with reverence or with scorn, with love or with hatred, as the case may be, to the great poet, fashioned so unlike most of our ideas of what a poet should be, yet shadowing over earth and sea in an abstract size and vastness which no one can deny. This kind of shadowy impression of greatness made upon the mind of the world in spite of itself, is almost a more convincing proof of the rank of the poet than that more just and clear conviction of excellence which intimate knowledge gives; and in Goethe's case the unanimous testimony is all the greater from the fact that he is, as a man, hateful to a great proportion of the people who unwillingly accord to him so high a place among his peers. His is one of the figures about which men, looking back, lose all the calm of historical observation. The thought of him still influences the mind as with a personal partisanship. To the smaller number (and let us allow that this smaller number includes those who know Goethe best) he is more than a poet—he is an idol, one of the greatest, wisest, and best of beings. But to a large proportion of the world he is, as a man—we do not think we use too strong a word—hateful. His votaries worship him with a blind faith and superstition such as are commonly enough found in conjunction with the highest intelligence, so long as that faith is not called forth towards sacred things; and a great many of the rest of us detest him with an instinctive and thorough repugnance which is independent of reason. But no one denies

his greatness, his exalted place, his rank among the highest. To very few men since the world began has such a universal testimony been given; and it is not in the nature of things that such a testimony could be other than true.

But in face of this great and perplexing figure there are so many questions to ask and difficulties to settle, that the work of the critic is hard and doubly perplexing. A great many minds of high endowment have yielded themselves, with a devotion almost abject, to the influence of Goethe; while upon as many more he has exercised as distinct an influence of repulsion, driving them from him. The former class have expounded themselves and their worship so fully as to need no further exposition. To the latter he appears in his greatness like a gigantic *génie* of the earth and air—a being possessing attributes so different from ours that it requires an effort to recognise him as actually of our own species, bound by the same rules of being. This separation from human nature is not of the kind which in imagination we are willing to assign to poets. His is not the fanciful, abstract, dreamy being, helpless among the cares of earth, born for higher occupations and aspirations which we are disposed to accept with a certain indulgence—an indulgence which makes our reverence the greater. Instead of that poetical conception of the poet, the spectator finds himself face to face with a man perfectly qualified to contend with the world, and to master it; not only not deficient in practical force and adroitness, but singularly endowed with all the strength and all the weapons necessary for everyday warfare; not shrinking, timid, and impassioned, but brave and cool beyond the ordinary range of mortal strength and

self-command; not impulsive and wayward, but collected and steadfast—full of reflection, resolution—a man of purpose and perseverance and strenuous capacity. At sight of all these manifold endowments our inclination to patronise what we admire is rendered impossible; and with something of the same feeling which steels a man's heart against the woman, however attractive, however fascinating, who has no need of his superior strength, the heart of the world is repelled by the poet who stands in need of no indulgence, no tender patronage, no kind shutting of the eyes to his weakness, in the very midst of its adoration of his powers.

There are, however, reasons deeper than this superficial one for the repugnance which many readers, even when unable to resist the magic of his genius, feel towards Goethe. There is something inhuman in his greatness. We do not use the word as implying any want of geniality in his character, or of general benevolence and kindness towards other men; but rather to express the strange separation and self-concentration of his nature. He was inhuman, as Jove and Apollo were inhuman. It is not as a man, but as a demi-god raised above man in a smooth and grand completeness, that we regard him. He is not, as other men, created for common duties and common relationships, whose life is a network of connection with others, who exist for others, and for the ordinary use and service of the world. Goethe, on the contrary, is one of those rare beings for whom the world is made. To his own consciousness it is a huge machine devised for his education, for his instruction—to minister to him, to communicate experiences, informations—to afford him, by its different arts, and by various of its inhabitants, *stedping-stones* by

which to elevate himself to such a position that gods and men may look upon him and wonder. He is irresponsible, un-moral, a being above law—nay, he makes the impression upon us of a being existent of his own power and will, not throwing off the bonds of duty so much as born in a sphere above them—created for his own purposes, not for God's. To some minds this very idea may seem profane, as if implying that such an incarnation of semi-duty was one of the possibilities of life; but it is an idea which we think must, in one way or other, strike all who seriously contemplate the character of Goethe. So far as we can recall, he stands alone in this superb but unswerving isolation. There is no one like him anywhere—so self-concentrated, so self-conscious, so calmly certain that for him the universe is and was created. Such an idea lightly and momentarily held is part of the splendid inheritance of faith with which most of us enter life; but in usual circumstances this confidence is torn from us so soon that the belief is too airy and evanescent to afford more than one delusive moment of grandeur and delight. Goethe never allowed this faith to be taken from him. It was no delusion of his youth, but the calm assurance of the demi-god's nature: that earth and Germany and Saxe-Weimar were especially formed—not he for them, as is the generous ideal of another kind of soul, but they for him; that the men, and especially the women, who came in his way, were in like manner created for his use, to afford him the means of cultivating himself and all his faculties. We might put Shakespeare, and Italy, and the Greek mythology, and even science, into the same category, were it not that these sources of mental profit had to be shared with other men, and pri-

marily belonged, so to speak, to other men, so that he could not lay the first and most absolute claim to them. But this is the position in which we find him from the earliest of his days to the last. Even when he makes himself the exponent of his age, he is still separate from that age, taking advantage of it, raising himself upon its shoulders, indifferent to it, thoughtful only for himself.

This self-concentration, however, can scarcely be called selfishness; neither is there any lack in it of a certain careless generosity, magnanimity, even fellow-feeling for the lesser creatures who surround him. No one more than he feels the pathos of the situation in which he leaves his Frederikas, his Frau von Steins. His sympathy, it is true, has not the slightest influence upon his actions, which are moulded by a higher rule—viz., that of the necessities of progress and self-culture; but still he has the power of throwing himself into their feelings, and of sorrowing with them. In other relationships less delicate he is perfectly kind, liberal, friendly. Suffering is as disagreeable to him as ugliness, and he never hesitates to exert himself to remove it. He is even susceptible—most tremulously and delicately susceptible—to all superficial influences. In his youth, his biographer Mr. Lewes tells us, he would take up the occupations and accomplishments of his friends along with them, studying art with the painter, and even learning his trade with the craftsman, in an exuberance of social sympathy such as few can emulate. All that the demi-god is capable of was strong in Goethe. He could throw himself into the being of others, working with them, feeling with them, finding the enjoyment of a larger nature in their sorrows as well as in their joys. What he could not do was to receive them into his being, as he threw himself into

theirs. That was not possible to him. It is the limitation of greatness, but still it is a limitation. He could communicate almost to any extent of liberality, but he could not receive. All that came to him from the outer world was superficial, affected the surface of him, and was consciously used by him for his own mental advantage, but never possessed him, carried him away, drew him out of himself. Such natures are to be met with even on a lower intellectual altitude than that of Goethe. Men there are in the world, and even women, kind, generous, and sympathetic, who are yet incapable of those impressions from others which turn the scale of fortune and direct life into new channels. They may receive comfort, pleasure, instruction from without, but never direction, or even serious influence. They may be warm lovers and strenuous friends, but they are incapable of being turned from the natural tenor of their way or swept into the fulness of another. Goethe was moved by all, yet moved by none—tremulous like the compass, yet, like it, fixed, and incapable of divergence from the grand centre of gravitation. And in his case the centre was himself.

We are not so daring as to say a word against that mystery of self-culture which many philosophers hold out to us as the only thing worth living for, and in which many great minds have spent all their powers. It may have a generous as it certainly has a noble side. The idea of a man who consecrates this fleeting human existence to the improvement of the faculties God has given him, scorning all meaner kinds of advantage, is without doubt a fine one; and it is finer still when his aim in self-improvement is to serve and help his fellow-men. Yet there is something in human nature which cries out

against this pursuit with the vehemence of instinct, and is, secretly or openly, revolted by it. We applaud the man who pursues Art to perfection, who pursues Science even in her least attractive forms, or who devotes himself with enthusiasm even to the lower branches of human knowledge. The spectator figures to himself something abstract, something apart from and loftier than the student which he follows through all difficulties, and labours, and struggles, even though at the cost of his life. But at the name of self-culture our enthusiasm flags. We do not explain the change of sentiment, we merely state the fact. No doubt, of all the waste lands that are given us to cultivate, this one of the mind is the most valuable, and probably the most improvable; and we are bound to do our best with it, to produce the best that is practicable from it and in the best way. Most true; yet our prejudice remains unaffected. And there is reason in it, as in all universal prejudices. There is something in the theory of self-culture which transgresses all the modesties of human nature, and strikes that hidden consciousness of insignificance which lies deep down in our hearts, as with a jar of discord and ridicule. What! use all this great universe, so majestic, so steadfast, and so sublime, for the cultivation of one speck upon its surface; make vassals of all the powers of earth, and all the sights of nature, and all the emotions and passions of man—not for some big purpose, like the glory of God or the advancement of the race, but for the polishing and improvement of one intellect, for the sharpening of one man's wits, and the enlarging of his experience and the improvement of his utterance! The intellectualist may say, How splendid the organisation which can thus show its supremacy over all things cre-

ated! but the common man feels a certain sharp revulsion, a mixture of scorn and indignation, humiliation and shame. There is even a bitter mockery to him in this devotion of himself as well, his anguish and his errors, to the cultivation of the arrogant intellect, which regards him as a bundle of natural phenomena. This gives the special sting to that repugnance which we feel involuntarily towards the human creature whose life is professedly spent in the culture of himself. Does not something fail in our reverence for Wordsworth, for example, when we are bidden to believe that the poet—instead of living, as we are glad to think, in an enthusiasm of communion which was almost worship, with his mountains and lakes—made them instruments for the cultivation of himself, putting himself simply to school there, and living that life of lofty seclusion for him and not for them? How different is the feeling with which we contemplate Burns, who was never apart from these influences of nature, whose head and heart were full of them, who was made a poet by the grey hills and moorlands, the homely beauty of the ploughed fields, the daisy under his plough, and the stars over his head, but never once thought, in his simplicity, of self-culture by their means. Goethe offends a thousand times more deeply than Wordsworth ever did, since man, not to say woman, is his primer and spelling-book, and the years of his curriculum are marked by so many sucked oranges in the shape of loves and friendships from which he had taken all the sweetness that was in them ere he passed upon his triumphant way. This is his sin against humanity—the sin which we cannot pardon him; which neither genius nor success, nor even benevolence, graciousness, and charity, can make up for. Other men have

no doubt been equally inconstant, equally disrespectful of their fellows; but somehow the coarsest Lovelace has an excuse which the philosophical lover has not; and he who sacrifices old allies to his ambition is less of a criminal to nature than he who, after having *exploité* another human soul, puts it aside because he has got all he can out of it, and it is useful to him no more.

It is thus that we sum up the indictment of humanity against the great poet, whose greatness we throw no doubt upon, whose works we will not attempt to depreciate, and whose place among men is, we admit, beyond the reach of assault. No contemporary nor any successor has had so much influence upon literature. He has been the originator of schools of poetry with which he himself was scarcely connected. He has given the divine stimulus of awakening life to more than one mind almost as great as his own, and all this independent of the mass of noble poetry which in his own person he has bestowed upon the world. But with all he stands among us in a beauty scarcely human, smiling that smile of the superior which is alien to genius,—a great being who watches us, pities us, tolerates us, pierces us through and through, with half-divine perception, but is no more one of us than Jove is. His fulness, completeness, good fortune, long life, exemption from all natural griefs and calamities, are scarcely required to heighten the effects of nature; but they do nevertheless raise the tone of colour and intensify the high lights in this wonderful picture. Even his personal beauty adds to the strength of the hypothesis. He is no man like us, but a veiled Apollo, a visitor from among the gods. All sense of ordinary human morality, responsibility, is to be laid aside in our contemplation of him, and we yield to admira-

tion, even to enthusiasm, for his genius, with a reluctance which contrasts strongly with the hearty readiness of the applause which we bestow on much inferior men.

We must add, however, that all this is said from an English point of view, and professes to represent no more than the sentiments of a large portion of foreign readers. Goethe has been the idol of his own country since ever he revealed himself to her, as Dante is the idol of Italy, and Shakespeare of England. And we do not doubt that, had we space to pursue the inquiry, he would be proved to be such an embodiment of the genius of his country, in all its height and breadth, its remorselessness and kindness, its cold determination and mystical hot enthusiasm, its steady pursuance of an end through whatsoever means were necessary, shrinking from nothing—as to afford reason sufficient for the worship given him by his countrymen. Into this consideration it is not necessary to enter; but it is well to remember that the aspect of the man, which strikes us with repugnance, is one which has raised his own people to the highest expression of sentiment which a nation can make towards its favourite singer. That deep-searching Teutonic mind which spares no trouble, no labour to itself, no cost to others—which has such a melting susceptibility indoors, and such a pitiless determination without—is the kind of mind to appreciate self-culture in all those heights and depths which thrill our less thoroughgoing philosophy. The steady perseverance of a scientific aim through everything, the subordination (when necessary) of other people's happiness and comfort to the acquisition of a fine piece of spiritual experience—processes which strike us with a certain sense of

calm and polished barbarity—are to the Teuton so natural and praiseworthy as to claim no special comment. Neither the poet nor the nation would do this wantonly—only when necessary,—when the culture of the one or the progress of the other made it indispensable. To our minds such ways of working one's will are never indispensable: but feelings differ even in the heart of civilisation. That Goethe, however, in his integrity, may very well be taken as a type of his nation, few Germans will hesitate to allow with pride. All its patient, long-enduring theories, its kindliness in detail, its stern abstract disregard of all cruelties that are necessary, its persevering pursuit of knowledge at any cost, its abundant sentimentalities and pitiless resolution, are all to be found in him magnified and glorified. His serenity is the very apotheosis of its phlegmatic temper, his brilliant persistence the most beautiful type of its obstinate determination. And when we read of the poet's use of everybody and everything around him, men's friendship and women's love, for his own stepping-stones and educational courses, we remember (with a shudder) the later story of those Prussian * officers who marched secretly at the head of imaginary armies through peaceable France before a blow had been struck or menace uttered, placing their pickets in imagination with a horrible matter-of-fact and business-like prevision of what was to come; and writing down—in the gay *cafés* amid merry talkers all unconscious of that grim comment upon the uncertainty of their peaceable lives—those notes and reports which were at once the foundation and foreshadowing of reports made afterward, when the armies were no longer imaginary, and when all this awful cold-blooded

* See official reports of Prussian generals touching the late war.

study had ended in the victory which no doubt it deserved. No doubt the victory was deserved; being wrought for by such long labour, such minute care, such persevering, patient, unwearied work. But the work, and the way of deserving, are such as chill the blood in one's veins.

We repeat, if it is necessary to repeat it, that we are neither accusing Goethe nor his country of any want of the gentler affections—kindness, charity, and benevolence. He was very good to a great many people, supported various poor petitioners, took thought and pains for his dependents, and was often most considerate and sympathetic in word and feeling, as well as kind in act. He was simply remorseless in carrying out his projects, whatever they might be—pleasantly, good-humouredly, affectionately remorseless—not to be turned from that sublime work of self-cultivation by anything in earth or heaven.

Goethe was born in the year 1749, in the town of Frankfort, in the old world, before the French Revolution was dreamt of, when Frederick was fighting, and Louis Quinze heaping up the measure of iniquities which were to be visited upon the heads of his children. Germany was an unknown land to what were then called the muses. To all the wits it was a country of barbarians, of everlasting mist and darkness. Even its own sons despised its noble language, its wealthy traditions, the poetry and music that lay incipient, undeveloped about the roots of the national life. A few bald French couplets were more precious in the eyes of Teuton kings and nobles than all the chaotic traditional riches native to the soil. Other stars were beginning to come out in the sky, less known and less knowable, by dint of dealing with arts less universal than that of Song,

when the great Sun of German literature rose unthought of out of the homely Frankfort street. The poet was born in that condition of life which the melancholy Jewish thinker prayed for. His family was neither rich nor poor. They had no nobility to open to them the higher heavens of German society, but they had civic importance and consideration, which in its way is almost as good. If thus he had little claim upon the notice of the great, the young Goethe was still in a position which attracted the interest of many, a perfectly well-known individual, whose doings, if remarkable, could not fail to attract speedy notice. And from the beginning these doings were remarkable. Through all the course of his education he stands forth upon the duller background of the ordinary youths about him—a figure always striking, though more from a certain air of jocund greatness and good-humoured superiority to everybody around than from more tangible causes. At Leipsic, at Strasburg, at home in Frankfort, wherever he goes he is not as other lads; he is already the young demi-god among ordinary flesh and blood—kind to the lower creatures about him—with a jovial carelessness, beneficence, and sympathy, throwing himself into their smaller concerns, yet always looking over their heads, finding no equal amid the youthful crowd, and requiring none, his nature being satisfied with the other relationship. At Leipsic there was a certain Käthchen upon whom he experimented with rudiments of love-making, trying his prentice hand in that art of producing emotion which was always so pleasant to him. At Strasburg or near it he found Frederika, one of the sweetest simplest figures in the whole panorama of his life, whom he loved after the Goethe fashion, as

long as was perfectly agreeable and useful to him, and left when her day was over, sorry for her with a magnanimous sense that to lose him was indeed a calamity worth lamenting. His friends of the other sex ministered equally to the young demi-god's spiritual nourishment. One of them was Jung Stilling, whose poverty and homeliness the beautiful popular Goethe patronised and protected. "Sympathizing with Stilling, listening to him, and dexterously avoiding any interference with his religious faith, he was not only enabled to be his friend, but also to learn quietly and surely the inner nature of such men." Another friend attracted him by a different exposition of human nature, as knowing "how to subordinate himself with dignity." Thus the splendid student began his life's career. With or without dignity, all who came in his way had to subordinate themselves, to open their secret chambers and give up what enlightenment was in them to the eager and insatiable curiosity with which he ranged about this little-known world. A noble sentiment and a noble power, it may be said, and the pursuit of such knowledge well worth any man's while. Yet somehow the process chills the spectator, gay as is the soul and brilliant the career of this great learner, this Welt-kind, apprenticing himself to life.

His first work of any importance was the heroic drama of 'Götz von Berlichingen,' which was also Walter Scott's first work, so to speak; the forerunner of all those Marmions and Ivanhoes, which have long obliterated and superseded their German pioneer. 'Götz' was written when Goethe was twenty-two, and is perhaps more remarkable as being his banner of revolt against the poetical canons of his time, the outburst of a new national literature and new

generation of genius—and also as the origin of a school of poetry widely extended among ourselves, and scarcely yet exhausted in force and power—than from its own intrinsic merits. These merits we cannot think to be great; though that it was wonderful in its daring there can be no doubt, and startled the whole German world by a marvellous revelation of something of their own, worth caring for, which would naturally have the profoundest effect upon a people living, as it were, out of their own language in the borrowed delights of an alien literature, neither congenial nor natural to them. In circumstances so exceptional it may be right to characterise this drama as "a work of daring power, of vigour, of originality—a work to form an epoch in the annals of letters;" or, with a newspaper of the day, to describe it as "a piece in which the three unities are shamefully outraged, and which is neither a tragedy nor a comedy, but is, notwithstanding, the most beautiful, the most captivating monstrosity." In these days, however, few English readers will find 'Götz' either captivating or beautiful. It is bustling, rapid, and full of activity in its plot and action; yet it strikes us as looking much more like a fossil than an animated picture of life. One reason of this probably is, that the author, with a philosophic coolness most characteristic of his nature, makes it his aim not to represent any group of individual souls, their passions and motives, but to give "a picture of the age." His picture of the age, however, is abrupt and fragmentary. It has neither the fulness and richness of Scott, nor the minute and patient detail of Manzoni; although, so far as this effort is concerned, Goethe was the parent of both these great writers. The drama is a breathless

sketch—rapid, stirring, and full of movement, but without passion, almost without strong emotion. Götz himself is but thrown in in bold outline upon the canvas, his character very faintly indicated, and his position never made quite clear. His mixture of patriotism and individualism; his readiness for a raid at any time; his loyalty, such as it is, to the Emperor, and hostility to everybody else,—have not the clearness and force which such a picture requires. The vacillating *contre-héros*, again, Weislingen, is little more than a shadow. The manner of his reconciliation to Götz; the way in which he falls in and then out of love with Maria; the perfectly proper and pretty behaviour of that young woman herself, who, after a brief engagement to this captivating traitor, calmly makes up her mind to love and wed her next suitor,—are neither distinctly explained, nor indued with that positive reality of action which makes explanation unnecessary. Of itself, indeed, the production would be but of small account, were it not for the results which have flowed from it: it was as the opening of a door into that romantic and picturesque world of the middle ages, which has since afforded us so many splendid pictures. A work altogether destitute of passion, and made up rather of conventional drawings of certain typical characters than of any living study of the men and women of the past, it has yet produced the brilliant school of fiction in which Scott's glowing pictures take the highest place, and to which we also owe the 'Promessi Sposi,' and even 'Notre Dame.'

Goethe's genius opened up this way, and gave the first impulse. Perhaps it was but the carelessness of his youth pushing the door open as he passed, throwing the impulse from him at random, in the swing and

fulness of his progress, which made the real and immediate result of his first effort in sustained composition so much less great and notable than its succeeding ones. But the English reader, at least, will trace with more interest the germs of some of Scott's most animated scenes in the hasty narrative of 'Götz von Berlichingen,' than will move him towards that narrative itself. The trooper's description to the wounded Selbitz of the distant battle has in it a curious suggestion, which is worked out with infinitely superior force in the prison scene in 'Ivanhoe,' where Rebecca with much more eloquence performs a similar service for the wounded Saxon. And the abrupt introduction of the *Vehme Gericht* may also be identified as having suggested the more elaborate study of that mysterious and somewhat theatrical secret society which is to be found in 'Anne of Geierstein.' Thus Goethe's first production had a fate quite beyond its absolute merits. It was not a creation, but it was creative: It helped into being perhaps the most brilliant, and universally, if temporarily, successful development of literature ever known. The philosophical critic, looking back upon all the extravagances and exaggerations of that romantic school, may doubt whether the world was much the better for it. But certainly the world has been the better for Scott; and Goethe's early outburst of romanticism would seem to have been the sign-post which directed his genius to that hitherto untrodden way.

Having cast this seed into the fruitful world, which received it eagerly, with clamours of applause more than suited to the occasion—for indeed that world did not know that Scott was coming, and Manzoni and the rest, and clamoured for 'Götz' only, who was scarcely worth its trouble—the careless

young demi-god swept on upon his wildly-splendid, ungovernable, yet always self-controlled way. The bigness and sweep of his going gives a certain air of wild freedom to his youthful career; but it is curious to see how perfect is the self-control which exists underneath the youthful *abandon*, and how thoroughly Goethe has himself and his passions in hand, going just so far as he thinks fit, and no further, either in love or riot. 'Götz,' we have said, was his standard of revolt against literary canons, unities, and established law of every description, the restraints of which he did not choose to endure. But the work which followed was more real, permanent, and influential than 'Götz.' We in this generation have partially forgotten, partially drifted away from, all possibility of interest in the 'Sorrows of Werter;' but its influence has not yet died out of the world, and it is very nearly impossible to overestimate the importance not of itself, but of the stimulus it gave to the imagination. As 'Götz' created the romantic, so did 'Werter' the sentimental school of literature—which was a questionable advantage perhaps, yet acted upon the mind of Europe in a quite prodigious and almost incalculable way. The wild passion of the second outburst is as different as possible from the calm historical character of the former. 'Werter' is, as everybody knows, the story, told almost entirely by himself, of a young man distraught with love. It is a mixture of two experiences in real life—one of them being that of Goethe himself, who, like Werter, fell in love with a betrothed maiden; but being Goethe, and not Werter, mastered his love as soon as he had got all the imaginative and mental sweetness possible out of it: the other that of a less fortunate youth, bearing the unlucky

name of Jerusalem, whom love drove to suicide. Goethe put his friend's end to his own story, and the result was such a revelation of youthful sentiment in all its foolishness, weakness, strength, infinitude, and absurdity, as perhaps has never been made before or since. This is not the time to criticise 'Werter.' Its faults have long been apparent to the world, and, as ill-luck would have it, these faults are the very things which have been so repeated *ad nauseam* that the parent book has to bear the burden of much folly not its own. But something more true and real lay beneath, in which human nature itself found expression. In these melancholy pages, there is not only a somewhat maudlin lover working himself up to frenzy, but the imagination of a whole race, wild, excited, full of questioning and discontent, tossing itself against those prison walls of ordinary life, law, and wellbeing, which are to the sober soul a home and shelter. Scepticism and clean negation of everything unseen and intangible had come to their climax in the world; and following that climax, or along with it, had come its unfailing accompaniment, that profound spiritual disgust, weariness, and misery, which, so long as human nature retains something spiritual in it, must always attend upon infidelity. If a man is to have no soul, it seems indispensable either that he should have no imagination, or that that imagination should go mad and lose itself in a hundred fluctuations of misery, from unrest to despair. "'Werter,'" says Carlyle, "is but the cry of that dim-rooted pain under which all thoughtful men of a certain age were languishing; it paints the misery, it passionately utters the complaint—and heart and voice all over Europe loudly and at once responded to it. True, it prescribes no remedy; for that was a

far different, far harder enterprise, to which other years and a higher culture were required; but even this utterance of pain, even this little, for the present, is ardently grasped at, and with eager sympathy appropriated in every bosom."

This description places the work upon a higher level than we should ourselves be inclined to give it. 'Werter,' so far as it is a spiritual cry at all, seems to us more a protest against unhappiness than the expression of that sublime discontent which concerns one's own being in the first place. But of all the protests of humanity there is none that echoes so widely and strikes so deep. Why should not *we* be happy? What need can there be in heaven or earth so absolute, so unanswerable as this? and if personal happiness is not to be had, why should the lawless and hopeless soul endure, why should it suffer the happiness of others? Setting aside all religious restraints, the question, it seems to us, is simply unanswerable. Philosophy at the highest can but encourage and stimulate the despairing soul by arguments as to what is best and most courageous in his circumstances. But there is a great deal to be said on both sides of the question; and while suicide is cowardice in one way of thinking, it is undoubted courage in another. Such was, we think, with great reason, the opinion of Goethe's age. But 'Werter' is neither an apology for suicide nor an argument in its favour. It is only a picture of the processes by which a weakly-patient, vacillating, and doubtful man is driven by the gradual working up, half conscious and voluntary, of his own feelings, to adopt that vulgar *tour de force* and easy way of getting out of his dilemma. No character has proved itself so interesting to genius as that

of this doubtful being, never quite sure of what he would be at, unable to take any decisive step, plagued by his power of seeing all sides of a question (which is our modern fashion), or by incapacity for taking stringent measures of any kind either to carry out his own wishes or to subdue them. What a wonderful descent, however, it is in the scale of power, from the sublime vacillation of Hamlet to the maudlin lingering of Werter! We do not mean to compare the two—that would be in every way unjust; for the great charm of 'Werter' is simply its youthfulness, its revelation of an immature mind and exuberant imagination—and any comparison between it and our great poet's most splendid work would be as ridiculous as inappropriate; but yet under what changed conditions, with what curious difference, does the great type of hesitation, of doubt, of unrest, present itself to the one and the other! Shakespeare, with that perfection of good sense, good taste and feeling, which are so largely mingled in the divine intuition of genius, has put away love altogether from the great intellectual being who wavers before the awful question set before him—a question which concerns principles much more momentous than his own personal happiness or misery. It seems even profane to imagine the possibility of Ophelia's frown putting the times out of joint for Hamlet. But the question of personal happiness is the one specially involved in 'Werter.' It is Lotte who is the sun and centre of his world: his philosophy, his musings, nature itself, alter according as her brow is bright or cloudy; and though all manner of sadnesses are skilfully worked into the picture to exaggerate the situation and deepen the gloom, these are rather reflections of feeling than independent thought,

and as certainly ray out from the central fact that Werter himself is personally wretched, as do the details of his suicide. With Hamlet, on the other hand, personal feelings have little to do. We have no reason to suppose that disappointed ambition, for instance, had any share in the heaviness which overshadows him from the beginning. He is sick of the mystery of sorrow and evil about him, full of forebodings which have nothing personal in them, dim perceptions of undefined wrong, suspicion, and fear, as of a spirit walking in the dark, not knowing but divining the presence of evil companions that make night hideous. This dim and sickening consciousness of wickedness and falsehood round him has swept the natural delights and miseries of youth out of Hamlet's mind at the very outset of his history. His love has been blown out of sight, out of mind, by that chill air of suspicion and miserable doubt which has killed, so to speak, his personal existence, his self-regard, his capacity for enjoyment—even his natural interest in what becomes of him. Even before the shock of absolute knowledge which unveils to him the mystery of crime which he suspected, he has ceased to care much what becomes of him. Not one gleam of personal motive is in all he thinks and says. His sense of undisclosed wrong—of evil preferred to good, and falsehood to truth, of unreality and lies in everything great and small that surrounds him, has paralysed the very sense of self within him.

We ought to ask the reader's pardon once more for placing Hamlet in juxtaposition with Werter—but Werter here means Goethe, a more worthy comparison; and it is interesting to note how utterly opposed our Shakespeare's theory is to all the artistic principles of Goethe's life and work. It em-

bodies an aspect of the human nature astray in the world which has not occurred to his intelligence, great as that intelligence is. In 'Werter,' as in 'Meister,' and still greater in 'Faust,' the centre of the world to Goethe is self. His highest misery is that man can get so little out of this world—that his happiness must be but in dreams—that all is limited about him—that he never gets what he wants: whether it be Lotte, whether it be the supreme satisfaction of wisdom, whether it be pleasure—never can he get what he wants. If for a moment the delight that he seeks is accorded to him, how he has to smart for it! In his later years the poet himself attempted to show how there might be a remedy for this in a voluntary renunciation of everything that was not to be procured—a thin sort of life-theory not of much general use, we fear. But for the present, here is the grand point at which his vacillating hero and his philosophy generally break off from everything Shakespearian. Werter moans and maunders till the reader is very sick of him; while the excellent couple, whose union makes his misery, stand by wondering somewhat, sympathising a little, their stolid German steadiness just modified by their equal German sentimentalism. He does not want to separate that excellent Lotte from her excellent Albert; in short, he does not know very well what he wants, except to undo all the conditions of life, and get to be happy somehow. This is the aim, the sole end visible or conceivable; and this is the great poetic tendency of Goethe's genius. In 'Faust' it is treated with infinitely more splendour; but the central idea is still the same.

The reader of the present day cares very little, we presume, for 'Werter;' but that there are really charming scenes in it, full of the

most delightful sense of both natural and moral beauty, no one who has ever glanced at the book will deny. Its celebrity has harmed it in this particular. Had it not been the cause of a kind of literary revolution, the creation of a new school, the stimulus to a new kind of intellectual life, more justice would infallibly have been done to the exquisite simple background against which the hero staggers, and stumbles. Notwithstanding one recollection of delicious comicality which thrusts itself into our memory—the climax of that scene of the thunderstorm, in which Lotte, awed and overcome by sublime emotion and admiration, lays her hand upon Werter's and murmurs "Klopstock!"—we agree with Mr. Lewes in his admiration of "such clear sunny pictures, fulness of life, and delicately-managed simplicity." The groups of children, especially, are lovely, natural, and unaffected in the highest degree; and Goethe's power of representing them is one of the most attractive features of his genius, saying much which we should not have otherwise divined [both for the poet and the man.

'Werter' took the world by storm. It pleased everybody except—for a time—Lotte herself and her good husband, who resented, as they well might, the liberty taken with them. Goethe, dazzled by the brilliancy of the light he flashed upon them, was, or professed to be, much astonished by this, and breathed forth the deepest penitence. It is difficult, however, to believe that a man so able could have thought it possible that the respectable couple whom he made the centre of such a romance could have taken it calmly. He got over this difficulty, however, with ease, and thus leaped into fame by means of that which is generally one of the most private

episodes in a young man's life—an unsuccessful love; his sense of the artistic force of the situation mastering even that unpleasant sense of personal discomfort which is apt to move the youthful mind under such circumstances. Mr. Lewes proves most distinctly, that his separation from the admirable Lotte was indeed very little of a heartbreak to the poet, and that he managed to enjoy life and a multiplicity of other loves even at the terrible moment of her marriage. And immediately after, another star, called Lili, rose upon the firmament, calling forth much the same comedy of rapid love, rapture, wavering, and indifference to the affection once attained, which had marked his youthful passions before. He was delivered from his last indecisions in respect to this new experience by the appearance upon the scene of his Duke, Karl August of Saxe-Weimar, the little potentate who has snatched out of oblivion a certain standing-ground among the things that remain, by dint of his patronage of the great poets of Germany, and the curious æsthetical centre which he managed to establish—metropolis of wit and refuge for genius. Goethe was but twenty-six when this distinction occurred to him. He went with his Duke to Saxe-Weimar, falling immediately into a friendship with him which lasted till death. Nothing could be more simple than the life they led; but its homeliness, and roughness, and odd mixture of the fine and the brutal, its dainty over-refinements and its romping jollity, belonged to the time and the nation, and were sanctified, as it were, by being fully shared by the prince upon whom the whole circle depended. The curious royal riot of the period which ensued, the grand-ducal entertainments, the open-air play-actings, the celebrations of every-

body's birthday, the odes, the masks, the illuminations, the crackers, and the music,—are they not all written in the book of Mr. Lewes? The members of the little court were almost all young, let it be said; and the pranks they played, and the high-jinks they executed, are the drollest interruption to a serious story. Everything was there that the imagination could desire to enrich the rollicking life of the young prince and the young poet; and, on the whole, there are worse things than the nonsense into which they plunged royally, though it was sometimes distinguished by tricks as stupid as if they had been a couple of foolish young Guardsmen. Here, too, Goethe found another love, in some respects the most serious relation of his life, in the person of the Frau von Stein, one of the high well-born ladies of the little court—a wife and a mother, to be sure, but that was a subject of indifference at the time; and we presume a believer in human nature may be allowed to think their connection, though most intimate and tender, an innocent one. At least it is unnecessary to discuss it here; for in those days morality, in the ordinary acceptance of the word, had scarcely any existence. To this lady Goethe remained entirely devoted for ten years of his life. He consulted her about everything, saw her and wrote to her daily, loved her as much apparently as he was capable of loving, and was loved by her; and though Mr. Lewes, in his capacity of prophet to Goethe, overwhelms this poor woman with reproaches for having shown a little feeling when she, too, in her turn, was cast aside, yet that will be the least of her faults to the reader, who probably will feel that a woman who has been worshipped for ten years may naturally be expected to feel a certain pained surprise

when that worship is withdrawn. Mr. Lewes has no mercy for the Frau von Stein. She was forty-five at the end of her reign, and ought to have made her lover a curtsy and retired gracefully, as is the best policy of women; or perhaps, better still, should have interested herself in finding a successor to her own place in the demi-god's affections. On the contrary, she was so extremely unreasonable as to be angry and wounded by his desertion! However, she was the centre of his life during his earlier career at Weimar, before the visit to Italy which made another epoch in it. During this time he wrote several of his plays, and at least began the composition of 'Meister.' Of 'Iphigenia,' 'Tasso,' and the rest, space will not permit us to treat. These are not the works which separate Goethe from other men; and 'Faust' had yet to be written and 'Meister' completed—the great works of his life.

We are so profoundly aware of coming at a disadvantage after the elaborate and complete comments of such writers as Carlyle, Lewes, and a host of others, that we feel our courage waver as we approach the greater productions of Goethe's genius. But for the fact, indeed, that no list of great poets in the century which is past could be in the least possible without including the author of 'Faust,' we should have shrunk altogether from the task. Goethe culminates in this great poem, which is as much the epitome of his genius as the 'Divina Commedia' is of the genius of Dante. The story is too well known to require any description. It is founded upon one of the legends which has taken deepest hold of the popular mind, especially in Germany; and with all its mystic meanings, its wild mixture of *diablerie*, and its profound intellectualism, no subject

can be supposed more likely to tempt the imagination of Goethe or to rivet the attention of his countrymen. The whole fable is peculiarly national. No other country has ever given so exalted a place to the philosopher, or been so willing to regard him as the possible first actor in a great drama; nowhere else have such lofty pretensions of mind been put forth, and nowhere else is such rough horse-play practicable, or such wildly grotesque superstitions. The rude life of the common people, unveiled by any poetic graces—the utter separation of the soul living in thought in the very midst of that teeming vulgar existence which gives so characteristic and striking a beginning to the story—is thoroughly Teutonic. Such a contrast elsewhere might have appeared overstrained, but in Germany it is natural. And only in Germany could the wild fantastic dream of the Brocken and its amusements, and the coarse horrors of the witch's kitchen, have been possible to the imagination. The drinking-bout in the wine-cellar might perhaps be equalled in other countries; but we doubt if any but a German poet would have ventured on so brutally realistic a picture, or permitted the boors to stand forth before us in all their besotted stupidity without even a gleam of wit to make them pardonable. The subject was thus adapted in an extraordinary degree both to the poet and his audience. In England its splendour power would no doubt sooner or later have forced it into notice, but its success could never have been national. Even now, we believe, when it comes to them with the sanction of generations, the first effect of 'Faust' upon the simple mind is much more an impression of disgust than of enthusiasm. We have been dragged into admiration by dint of the effusive and loudly-pro-

claimed delight of those we have looked up to as our guides in literature. But in Germany no such mediation was ever necessary. The work at once found understanding and appreciation; and it comes to us with this vast mechanical advantage, so to speak—the advantage of having been received into the permanent picture-gallery of the world by at least one unanimous nation.

The work itself, when we come to regard it more closely, is like the old Werter-cry, repeated in a deeper, vaster, more splendid tone. It is one of the most confusing and bewildering of all great poems. It satisfies the reader who looks no further by its strange and wildly tragic story, keeping its meaning safe for those who seek it. But to those who seek that meaning most anxiously, it appears a grand phantasmagoria wilfully broken, in which great gleams of sudden light are everywhere flanked by fantastic storm-clouds drifting up from some unknown sea, from some abyss of mystic vapour full of the most bewildering shapes and sounds of wonder. "The scenes are mere magic-lantern pictures," says Coleridge, who in his own dreamy soul ought to have been able, one would have thought, to comprehend his brother poet: and there is a certain reality in the image, however false its application may be. Scenes from a magic-lantern—with, however, the great living world for the curtain on which to display them, and a greater unseen world with all its mystic forces crowding in to fill up the intervals, framing every picture with rolling clouds of wonder, with huge shadows visionary and fantastic, yet terrible in their suggestiveness. Through the whole drama this sense of blended reality and unreality, this phantasmagoric character, possesses the spectator. He does not read, but looks on

while he is carried from the bright soft scenes of outdoor life, from the chamber of the student, from the more sacred chamber of the girl—up and away into the mountain mists, where that wild, senseless, hopeless revel is going on among the clouds, vainer than humanity at its vainest, sickening and terrible; then down again with a swoop, fate-driven, to the deeper phantasmagoria below, where all the sky and lights are changed, and woe has succeeded bliss, and the brief human dream of thoughtless love and delight has ended in death and murder and madness. Dreams all! with only that gigantic grasp of sorrow, pain unendurable, to distinguish the dream which is clothed in flesh and blood from that which is mere air and spirit.

What does it all mean? It means that in all the earth and all the air there is nothing that can satisfy the wandering, yearning, passionate soul, which is a stranger in this world and a sojourner like its fathers. Let this being throw every restraint aside; let him try knowledge at any cost, pleasure at any cost; let him adventure himself on the most awful of penalties in wild pursuit of something to satisfy him, scorning safety, comfort, virtue, everything that might be supposed to stand between him and enjoyment—and, lo! his fate is no better than that of the dullest slave: he has but a darker climax of misery, a deeper depth of pain, in proportion to the violence of his struggle. Who will show him any good? He seeks it in lofty ways, and in vile; in the flesh, in the spirit, in some wild intermediate region where fantastic delusions reign, and all is as wildly false as the disappointment is bitterly true. Never was a more tremendous moral worked out for our instruction; but the object of the poet

is not moral. He cares as little for morality as he does for probability, or the unities of art, or any other conventional thing. When Faust sets forth upon his wild journey, it is even with no belief in the possibility of that satisfaction for which he scornfully risks his soul, indifferent to the danger. In all he does and wishes there is the constant presence of this scornful despair, this want of all faith and real expectation. We feel that he accepts the devil's bargain, and sets out with him infinitely more for the excitement's sake, and to escape from the gnawing sense of his personal failure, than with any real belief that Mephistopheles can help him. His arbitrary and arrogant demand of the demon's services to procure him Margaret on the spot, as he might have demanded a flower, betrays this half-savage, half-contemptuous scorn of hopelessness. For Faust at that moment has no thought of Margaret in the deeper way of love, which surprises him afterwards when his soul is brought in contact with the fresh and frank girlish being, so simple, true, and tender, whose sudden and unthought-of touch staggers him for a moment in his wild career. Here one gleam of human reality, clear as the daylight, simple and penetrating as nature herself, alights momentarily upon the wanderer, but is obscured by the wild clouds that swallow him once again, the wild search to which he is driven by the fever within him and the fever without, his weird companion and his hungering, despairing soul. This, to our thinking, is the very heart and soul of the wonderful drama. The story embodies the tragedy of Gretchen, but to Faust it is but an incident in his awful history, an incident summing up, indeed, its inevitable and unchangeable character, its struggle of life and death between

the true and the false, between the actual and the unseen, and its desperate attempt to snatch some supreme flower of satisfaction out of that universal chaos—if not of the soul, then of the senses—anything, anything! which will make him say to the passing moment, “Linger, thou art so fair!” If we could imagine the mournful writer of Ecclesiastes—be he Solomon, be he some other heart-stricken sage—roused up into a sudden tragic passion of desire, making one last frantic effort to find something which has not already been, something out of the sickening routine of everyday disappointment, there are no other garments in which we could clothe him than those of this eager but unhoping spirit, the scornful, passionate, despairing Faust, who is as contemptuous of the risk of his soul as he is of the signing in blood of the conventional compact. And here it must be added that, if any gentle reader retains a lingering wish to be able to approve of Faust, or to find some moral excellence struggling through his darkness, that fond imagination had better at once be dismissed from the mind. No thought of morality is in the whole; on the contrary, its bonds are voluntarily and consciously laid aside in order that the last experiment may be tried without any obstacle; and this even the most didactic mind will recognize as a kind of necessity. Faust, accordingly, is not a being to excite any moral sympathy; he is not a good man captive to error, or led away by temptations of the devil—or even struggling against the forces of evil which are massed and grouped around him. On the contrary, he goes out to meet them. He inspects them with an eager scrutiny, and makes a distinct mental effort to find in them, if not some good, yet some pleasure,—a fact

which naturally increases tenfold the reality of his disgust and sickening perception of the everlasting meanness and pettiness of that wild riot which is so full of seeming *abandon*, but yet so slavish in its fantastical restraints. The only moment at which the man is hushed out of his wild fever is when the touch of love has arrested him—when compunction seizes him—when his wild course is stopped for the moment and a thought of the ruin he may bring upon the creature he loves daunts him in the delirious fearlessness which up to this moment has been his condition. The scene in the cave, for which Mr. Lewes curiously enough declares he can find no reason, seems to us the one point where the storm-driven spirit touches earth, before all the powers of hell tighten upon him that grasp which he scorns and loathes, but cannot any longer shake off. Love and Nature have momentarily turned him back into a man. “Shall I not feel her pangs—her ruin?” he cries. “Must I drag her and her peace into the dust?” It is the sudden soft murmur of the brook amid the horrors of the mariner’s dream—the sudden break of light in the sky, showing still in the midst of the tempest a possibility of calm. Short-lived possibility,—impracticable hope! for fate is not to be cheated, nor the demon, nor those wild impulses which give both fate and demon their power.

The character of Mephistopheles is perhaps the most wonderful creation in all fiction. He is not a man in the guise of a demon, like Milton’s magnificent Satan, but a true devil, without one mitigating feature, one compunction, one feeling, good or bad. From the time that he appears in the presence of the Lord, in a scene which we must say is not so

shocking to our feelings of reverence as it seems to have been in many cases, until the last word of the drama, which he snatches at to destroy if possible the one hope of the dying girl and her miserable destroyer, the completeness of his heartless, soulless, devilish nature is never disturbed by any inopportune breaking-in of humanity. The mocking unbelief which chuckles in the very presence of divinity over its own changeless, emotionless estimate of things human, is a more original conception than that of the haughty, remorseful demons who still remember their high estate, and in the very height of their pride are conscious of having fallen. Mephistopheles, however, who still now and then likes to see Der Alte, and finds it good of so great a Lord to be civil to the Devil, is such an inconceivable mixture of cold-blooded impudence and mockery as no human imagination ever before dreamt of. And there is an infinite subtle power in the way in which this being, in the very height of his unmitigated, unimpressible intellectualism, is yet bound by the most fantastic cantrips of *diablerie* which fascinates the spectator. He who could jeer when he came out of the presence of God, is yet held fast by the pentagram on the floor as if he were some sorcerer's familiar; and has to be thrice bidden to enter, and to go through various other contemptible formulas with a mixture of absolute rigmarole in his supernatural cleverness which betrays a mockery still more profound than the mockery of the devil—the saturnine laugh within a laugh of the man who can create and despise the very demon who leads him to perdition. We do not know of anything that can be put beside this extraordinary creation of genius. Shakespeare was at once too human

and too divine—too profoundly moral in his nature—to have been capable of it. He never could have brought himself to sneer at the Sneerer, and to hold up to everlasting mockery only, the worst and strangest and most pitiful impersonation of evil which ever occurred to genius. Other poets have elevated the Devil into a splendid embodiment of despair—they have hated him, contemned, even in a tender turn of the great poet's nature have pitied, the hopeless One; but only Goethe has made him at once powerful and ridiculous, victorious and paltry—the grotesque slave of an angel, as well as the remorseless master of the perishing soul.

It is in Margaret, however, that the mind of the reader, baffled and bewildered by all these mysteries, finds rest and refreshment and food for his sympathies. She is placed so beautifully on the canvas, and surrounded with such a bewitching atmosphere of song—and her presence is, besides, such an intense relief from the gloom and tumult of the other scenes—that it is almost impossible for us to allow that her character is the least truly conceived, and the least perfect in execution. This is so far natural that the use of woman in poetry is chiefly conventional or rather typical, and that so long as she represents a certain ideal of beauty, love, and innocence, individualism is not required for her. She is the light in the picture, a thing much more straightforward and free from complication than the darkness. We fear that in saying this we will shock many readers to whom Margaret is the true attraction of 'Faust.' Yet, nevertheless, we do not doubt that they will, to a certain extent at least, agree with us when they have looked a little closer into her. She is intended, it is evident, to be extremely young

—younger even than the ordinarily imagined age of girlish perfection—and perfectly simple, though rapidly developed under the magic of Faust's presence, admiration, and love. But perhaps, more from the fault of the age than the poet, this gentle creature is made so purely superficial as to yield at once to her lover without even a thought of the pollution involved—and that after she has been discoursing him in the garden scene with that wonderful mixture of gravity, piety, and bewildered girlish simplicity about his religion. To be sure, this may be said to be the effect of the spiritual power of Mephistopheles; but it is by no means one of the least powerful points in the story that Mephistopheles has no power whatever on Margaret. He steals the jewels for her, and manages for Faust a visit to her empty chamber—but he does no more. He cannot take the lover there when Margaret is within. He can neither force her innocent soul into sin, nor even throw her into a questionable position. Her downfall has to be left to herself; but this very downfall is at variance with her character. She who has but a moment before been full of sweet and anxious, though confused thought about her lover's faith—who has shown such quick and true spiritual perception as regards Mephistopheles, and who a little after sings to the Mother of Sorrows a hymn so full of the loftiest pathos—consents with the careless readiness of a wanton to the first proposal of evil. This is a mistake which would have been fatal had the drama been one founded upon the ordinary principles of art. As it is, however, the wild rush of the phantoms, who are always ready to flood the scene, and hurry it on from one chapter to another, prevents us from dwelling upon the

incredible rapidity of the action at this the central point of the story. Never was figure more pathetic than that of poor Margaret afterwards, though, indeed, her aspect up to the crowning anguish of the prison scene is that of an innocent martyr rather than of a Magdalen. "My heart is sore; my peace is gone," she sings in her early despondency before evil has come nigh her. But it is with a deeper tragic anguish that her song is full when she addresses the Mother of Tears—

"Wheresoe'er I go,
What woe! what woe! what woe
Is in my bosom aching!
When to my room I creep,
I weep! I weep! I weep!
My heart is breaking."

She is the victim whom man and the devil, the struggling mind and the malign spirit, require to give emphasis to their conflict with all the powers of heaven and all the laws of earth. Without this example of their reckless progress over the very neck of humanity, indifferent how and where their crushing footsteps fall, the impression made upon the audience would have been less immense; and the tragedy of Margaret brings the drama into a region accessible to those who have neither insight nor patience enough to follow that unending tragedy of 'Faust,' which may, for aught we know, be going on still, in ever new and new experiment, new clutches at those apples of Sodom which turn to ashes in the mouth.

We need not add that the 'Faust' Tragedy does go on to another weird scene, into which we shall not attempt to follow the poet. The worshippers of Goethe will be led by their *cultus* into these obscure shades of mystic poesy; but to us it is impossible to go with them, neither would the reader thank us for endeavouring to open to him a

bewildering region where even Mr. Carlyle's enthusiasm could induce few to follow. One of the many proofs that universal and sovereign poetry must confine itself within the limits of common human perception and feeling, lies in the fact that the great fable of 'Faust' resolves itself, in reality, with by far the greater majority of readers, into the story of Margaret. In her—in her simplicity and naturalness, and in the heartrending pathos of her woe—the human interest centres. It is immaterial to the most of us whether the philosopher ever finds or not the mouthful of content for which he risks heaven and hell; but the weeping maiden placing those flowers before the shrine, appealing to the Mother of Sorrows—the broken heart distraught with misery—never can be indifferent to us. The simplest soul weeps over her, and the greatest. What is Helena to us, or any other prehistoric witch?—but Gretchen lays the claim of inalienable human compassion and sympathy upon all our thoughts.

'Wilhelm Meister' is in every way a less comprehensible, less definable work than the great poem which has made Goethe's name forever illustrious. The best and soundest critics, and those who are most deeply acquainted with the genius of Goethe, speak with a concealed bewilderment which is not less, though it is more amusing, than that of the casual reader. Mr. Lewes himself is driven to beseech us to relinquish any attempt to discover the idea of the work, and to "stand fast by history," which would be very reasonable, if it were simply a history of Meister, which we were contemplating. "The first six books—beyond all comparison the best and most important—were written,"

Mr. Lewes, "before the journey
they were written during

the active theatrical period when Goethe was manager, poet, and actor. The contents of these books point very clearly to his intention of representing in them the whole nature, aims, and art of the comedian; and in a letter to Merck he expressly states that it is his intention to portray the actor's life. Whether at the same time he meant the actor's life to be symbolical, cannot be positively determined. That may or may not have been a secondary intention. The primary intention is very clear." This statement we should receive, we repeat, as perfectly satisfactory, had the novel been anything but the 'Apprenticeship of Wilhelm Meister.' The life of the comedian is indeed perfectly clear, and full of genius. Though the incidents are scanty, and though the tale goes on in that leisurely way which promises eternal duration, there is quite enough in it to justify its existence, were we not mystified at the beginning by an intimation of some hidden thread of meaning which no intellect yet has been clear enough to seize "The work is one of the most invaluable productions," Goethe says to Eckermann; "I myself can scarcely be said to have the key to it." It was the work of nearly twenty years of his life, was given to the world with vast solemnity, and has been accepted ever since its publication as an admirable parable of the highest class—if we only could divine what it meant. We confess frankly that the meaning which is so very hard to discover seems to us scarcely worth the trouble. The Goethe-idolater who reads it over and over will doubtless be rewarded for his pains; but the man who is not a worshipper to begin with, will probably never return to this perplexing book. Even from Carlyle we can glean not much further in

the way of absolute enlightenment than an enthusiastic commendation of the "temper of mind"—that is, the universal calm, impartiality, and largeness of apprehension displayed in the work—a temper which permits the most diverse characters to display themselves, each "having justice done" to him, each living "freely in his own element, in his proper form." This is the same quality which Mr. Lewes defends from the charge of immorality, by defining it as "a complete absence of all *moral verdict* on the part of the author." But both critics take refuge finally in that personal plea which seldom betokens much strength of argument. Goethe did it, therefore it must be great. "Meister" is the mature product of the first genius of our times, and must, one would think, be different in various respects from the immature products of geniuses who are far from the first, and whose works spring from the brain in as many weeks as Goethe's cost him years." This is a dangerous kind of certainty.

The second part of 'Wilhelm Meister'—his *Wanderjahre* for Travels, as it is called in the English version—is still more profoundly bewildering. The processions of misty figures that wind in endless obscurity through it, defy at once the intellect and the memory, and the mysterious education which goes on in the "pedagogic Province" under the superintendence of "the Chief of the Three," reaches to a height of mysticism quite beyond our reach. Such knowledge is too high for us. Yet there are lovely pictures in this wildest and strangest little volume; and a kind of ineffable unmeaningness, as of a purpose which has quite overshot its mark, attracts us somehow to the quaint, beautiful picture of the Holy Family in the first four or

five chapters. We have not the remotest idea what it means, and would much rather not have it explained to us; but it is like a picture of Van Eyck, or some other early Teutonic master—a group of beings, half celestial, half peasant, like nothing earthly; yet full of the sweetness of the homely soil. We have no reason whatever to give for this caprice of admiration; and it may be, for aught we know, rather a disgrace to us than otherwise; but we confess that in all 'Meister' this curious fantastic picture is the only one which has taken deep hold of our thoughts, or in the least touched our heart.

However, to return to the one irrefragable base of argument: Goethe wrote this book, and therefore it must have had a great deal of meaning in it. He lingered over it, in some curious twist of his great intellect, more than he did over any other work. 'Faust' was a trifle in comparison with what 'Meister' cost him. That this is but another instance of the manifold mistakes of genius, and of the special perversity of this genius, we might venture to say, were the poet any one but Goethe, who has the special privilege of possessing still a body-guard ready to repel any attack. But that the demi-god had this perversity is evident enough. When we read that in Rome his whole mind was occupied with study of the structure of plants—an investigation which surely would have been more appropriate to the Gartenhaus at Weimar—and that during the French campaign, in which he accompanied his Duke, he was absorbed in a theory of colors—the reader cannot but feel that either a wilful abstraction of his great faculties from the more important matters under his eye, or an almost childish waywardness of imagination, must

have been the cause of such strange aberration. A small man, who had been seized by such fantastic philosophies, would either have concealed them sedulously, or would have been characterised, *senza complimenti*, as a fool. But it was part of the great Goethe's instinct to follow his own intuitions wherever they led him, without shame or self-explanation.

We need not dwell upon such productions as the 'elective affinities,'—the *Wahlverwandtschaften*—the monument of a last love, which seized him when he was sixty, and at length married, for a pretty girl in her teens, who was sent back to school by way of putting an end to the uncomfortable romance. This story relates how a husband and wife fell in love with their two visitors, and all the delicate conflict of sentiment that ensued as to whether the four lovers were to be made happy or not. Mr. Lewes ingeniously assures us that, "taking life as it is, not as it ought to be, this situation may be considered as terribly true, and, although tragic, by no means immoral"—an opinion, however, so little agreed in by the English public at least, that the *Wahlverwandtschaften* is the only important one of Goethe's works which remains untranslated. We have said that by this time Goethe was at last married, an event which did not occur till nearly twenty years after the beginning of his connection with Christiane Vulpius, the mother of his children, who only then became his wife. The incident is not so pleasant that we should dwell upon it; but it is curious as illustrating the

illustrated theory of the weight
age which men avowedly
the yoke of marriage bring
themselves by other connec-
Goethe, who had taken the
many young existences,

had in his old age to groan under the bond, unlegalised, but strong as habit and his own weakness made it, to a coarse and intemperate companion, whom he could neither mend nor get free from. He married her finally, which was well, but did not alter the character of his sufferings, in which, recollecting the experiences of his past life, the vindictive reader will feel a certain satisfaction as of poetic justice. Certainly, unless the rules of morals and of feeling are abrogated by a man's greatness, which we do not hold to be the case, Goethe richly deserved to have a fat and intemperate termagant saddled upon him in the latter part of his life.

That life ended most tranquilly, among such honours as have fallen to few men. He lived so long that his fame went to the ends of the earth, and brought him universal worship. From all the different points of the compass idolaters came to bow before his shrine; and these not common idolaters. In intellectual Germany he ruled supreme, though he was not a political or patriotic German, and took but little interest in the national cause. His indifference, indeed, to public events must have reached the length of affectation, as we find him in August 1830 commenting upon the "eruption of the volcano" in Paris, meaning not the Revolution, news of which had just arrived, but a discussion in the Academy between Cuvier and Geoffrey St. Hilaire!—surely a ridiculous piece of pretence, which it is impossible to account for otherwise than by the perversity already referred to, or such a petty determination to be superior as it is painful to connect with the memory of a great man. His way to the grave was as pleasant, as gradual, as softly carpeted with mosses and flowers, as ever beguiled human footstep onward.

Weimar became famous through the world by his means. It was no longer known as a little ducal Residenz, or the capital of a tiny province, but as the temple in which was adored the greatest poet of his age. There, surrounded by his friends and children, he died. His companions were mostly gone before him. Duke and duchess and brother poet had been swept away into the unseen, and another generation had taken their place; but it was a generation which, from their earliest breath, had been trained to adore Goethe. He was eighty-two when the end came. He died an ideal death, with as small an amount of suffering as was inevitable, and with no consciousness of the approaching conclusion. The last words he uttered in this world were "More light!"—words most touchingly symbolical, though he meant it not. His life had been exceptionally prosperous, calm, and without anxiety. All he had wished for had fallen into his hands, and a long and mellow evening of repose had followed upon the bright and busy and lingering day.

Thus lived and laboured and died a man who has, perhaps, been classed

at more widely different estimations than any other man of his time. If we cannot allow, with Carlyle, that he and the first Napoleon were the two greatest men of their day, it must at least be conceded by the least willing that his influence spread more widely, and, we may say, has lasted longer, than that of any other modern member of the great brotherhood of poets. He did much, and he suggested much. He set minds as great as his own going with a touch of his finger. And he was infinitely fortunate in catching exactly the right moment and the right subject to move the world withal. His fame and his nature were both profoundly national; and though his patriotism was dull, he had perhaps more to do than any of his contemporaries with the creation of that national sentiment without which no country can ever be great. In every way, therefore, the effects which he meant to produce were increased and magnified by effects which he did not mean to produce—reflections and impulses which he threw off almost without knowing. There can be no better applause given to human greatness.

A TRUE REFORMER.—PART X.

CHAPTER XLII.—RETURNS OF THE KILLED AND WOUNDED.

A FEW days of rest and quiet at Squire Drew's, under his daughter's watchful nursing and care, sufficed to restore my little wife from the immediate effects of her fall, and we now moved on to Leatherby (again thrown into a state of wild excitement by the passage through of the troops on their return from the manoeuvres), where I left her and Sybil for a time in charge of Aunt Emily, while I returned to my official duties in town. For both Bracton and Tregart claimed their holiday; Lord Stowe had gone off to join Lady Sophia and the rest of his girls in Switzerland; and some one was wanted to represent the department and sign the routine letters that issued from the office.

"Next time you come you will be quite well and strong, dear," said our young hostess to Eva at parting; "and then we shall be able to go about in the woods together, and have plenty of music of an evening. But there would have been no use in trying to play on this old piano; it is a regular tin-kettle. However, by the time you pay your real visit, papa will have got me the new one."

"We must see how the crops turn out, my dear," said the Squire, "before we talk about buying pianos. Some of the potatoes down in the eight-acre look very queer; and as for corn, it is so down this year, but for these troops coming here we should not have been able to get a price for it at all. As lief give it to the pigs as take it into Leatherby market nowadays."

"A terrible state of things," said Mary, gravely; "and there was a great bough of an apple-tree broken

off in that gale the other day. Papa will have to go into the Gazette if this sort of thing lasts."

"It's all very well to laugh, Miss," rejoined the Squire ruefully, but his eye twinkling behind his spectacles; "but these are hard times for us poor farmers. We have never had a really good year since forty-six, and things grow worse and worse."

"You dear old papa, to hear you talk one might suppose you lived by what you can make out of the home-farm. But it is no use to pretend to be poor, because everybody knows that you are rolling in money. Anyhow, the piano is a promise; but there are ever so many things to be got besides, to make the house look decent before the Wests pay us their next visit; so you will have to spend I don't know how much money."

And so saying, Mary patted her father's cheek with her hands, and gave him a kiss.

"And you shall choose the piano yourself when you come to us in the spring, Mary dear."

"Ah, well," said the Squire, smiling, "it is well I have only one extravagant child instead of half-a-dozen. We must see how the cider turns out."

Although temporarily in charge of the department, there was not at this time much business for any one to do, and the dead dulness of London in early October was only faintly disturbed by a discussion got up in the newspapers on the question whether or not the late manoeuvres had been a success. The accounts furnished at the time had hardly settled the point con-

clusively. The special correspondent of the *Dial* had indeed supplied a good many dozen columns of his usual graphic descriptions, in which there was a great deal about the glinting of steel cuirasses; how Colonel Leitwayte galloped at the head of his regiment as if riding to hounds; how the Guards marched past like a wall; how Old Nick's Brigade (a playful appellation bestowed on the London Attorney Volunteers) were very well received by the public as they passed the saluting-flag; and how the various foreign officers collectively gave the distinguished correspondent their confidential opinion about the whole affair. But it was not all mere word-painting of this high character. There was also criticism. The correspondent of the *Dial* denounced boots and breeches, while he of the *Eclectic* wanted to know why gaiters were not served out. One critic said the cavalry were made no use of, another that they were shamefully overworked; one denounced the overplus of baggage, another inquired indignantly why spare flannel waistcoats and greatcoats were not carried for the men to put on when wet. One man said the cavalry were undersized, another that the horses were overweighted. One oracle said we ought to copy the Prussians, and have nothing but cuirassiers and uhlands; another, that heavy dragoons were obsolete, and that our cavalry ought to be made up of men of the jockey class, riding on hunting-saddles, and with no calves to speak of. And so on. The criticisms on the manoeuvres were, of course, still more precise and unanimous. The troops were too slow—and too quick; the cavalry was too far ahead—and was made no use of; a general who halted for a day was denounced for wasting precious time; another who marched twenty miles was hauled up

for overworking the soldiers, several of whom assured our correspondent personally that they were very tired; the militia were even better disciplined than the regulars; the militia were a lot of roughs. And so on. These criticisms, if not unanimous, being delivered with the undoubting tone of real infallibility, brought home the manoeuvres to every Englishman's breakfast-table in thoroughly vivid fashion, although possibly leaving him somewhat hazy as to the general results; while the unfortunate generals who were the principal victims of the operation, bewildered by the conflicting advice showered on them, and stung by the minute and detailed criticisms to which every movement, almost every look, was exposed, vowed they would never again undertake the responsibilities of a command in peace time. But no man can run up four columns of type a-day about nothing, unless he goes into details.

A correspondence which had more immediate interest for our establishment was that set agoing, I think, by my impulsive young friend O'Hagan, the member for North Cork, who, burning with impatience to denounce the shortcomings of the Control Department, could not wait the assembly of "pahrlemint," as he called it, but fired off a pathetic letter to the *Dial*, which, under the signature of "A wandering M.P.," recounted how the gallant three hundred narrowly escaped starving at Minton, and ended by saying that the writer denounced the whole proceeding. Nor was it difficult to detect in the replies of "A veteran Officer" the involved and hazy style of my friend Burley, who, passing by the question whether or not the Control Department had succeeded in feeding the handful of troops engaged on the downs, cited two columns of figures

to show that the department, since the present head had been in charge of it, had effected a saving in the public expenditure of £77,082, 15s. 4d., a calculation ingeniously made out by adding up all the items of the army estimates in which there had been a reduction, and leaving out all those in which there had been an increase. By aid of these diversions, and by dint of calling for returns and tabular statements on every possible subject that bore directly or indirectly on the manoeuvres, the office managed to pass the time very agreeably until the autumn was well advanced, and the members of the Government began to return to town. There was one return in particular, concocted by the joint efforts of Trubbell Soame, Meddell, and M'Muddell, under Burley's general superintendence, and to compile which the whole Movable-Store-Examination and Daily-Price-Current Branches were taken off their proper duties for a fortnight, and which drove the executive part of the Control Department nearly crazy in the supply of data for compiling it. This little document, which gave in a tabular form all statistics relating to the supply of food during the manoeuvres, had a hundred and twenty columns one way, and a hundred and eighty-four the other, and measured seven feet long by eight feet six wide; and many a happy hour did Burley spend over it, lying full length on the floor, pencil and note-book in hand, much as Napoleon was supposed to study his maps before entering on a campaign. And the result was worth the labour. For the general average which Burley compiled from the chart brought out the important facts that .827 per cent of the carriage engaged at the manoeuvres did not break down; that .57 per cent of the troops had received their rations regularly; that

.31 per cent received their rations without their forage; .18 per cent received forage but no rations; and only .019 per cent got neither one nor the other. These facts, it was held by the department, conclusively proved the efficiency of the system, regard being had to the novel character of the operations and the difficulties of the ground, and were deemed to constitute abundant evidence of the elasticity of the system, and a crushing reply to all cavillers. This last remark was meant for a hit at the P. G., as the official was styled who held the office I had now the honour to fill.

However, while the press were engaged in a lively discussion of these interesting figures, public attention was suddenly diverted by a thrilling triple murder in Bermondsey; where an unfortunate weaver under the influence of *delirium tremens* killed his grandmother and two aunts, and then tried to kill himself,—so that the interest about the manoeuvres gradually died away. An attempt was indeed made to revive it at the Royal Army and Navy Institute, where Burley read a paper, introducing to the profession the new game called the "Brod-und-Fleisch Spiel." This novel and ingenious game was played with a large map, and a box of tin toys representing the waggons of two opposing armies, which were manipulated by two officers of the Control Department, the object being to practise them in furnishing supplies to the army, while a certain amount of dice-throwing was introduced to represent the chances of war. Thus, if one side threw sixes, that stood for "all the mills in the enemy's country blown up," so the opposing controller had to bring up all his flour from the rear; five counted for "bad roads," when one-fifth of the waggons were withdrawn as broken down,—and so

on. The umpire decided what difference this loss would make in the available supply of provisions; and for every period of twenty-four hours passed by the troops without food a thousand metallic warriors were struck off the roll. The side which, after the end of a certain time, had the largest number of tin survivors, was deemed to have won the game. Burley was of opinion that by this ingenious diversion a controller might be trained up to any pitch of efficiency, without any money being wasted in actual practice; and the game was thought so highly of that it was determined to make it one of the subjects to be taken up at the competitive examination for admission to the department; whereupon all the cramming masters who prepared candidates for this test advertised that the pupils at their establishment would be provided with boxes of the *Brod-und-Fleisch Spiel* free of charge.

While the S. G. and his branch were engaged in these enlivening pursuits, my part of the office was occupied in the humble but perhaps more congenial duty of auditing the accounts of the manoeuvre disbursements; and O'Verduit, the most rising official among the P. G.'s, feeling, perhaps, that we had been rather left out in the cold all this time, was unusually active in his audits, ferreting out irregularities right and left, and coming down in splendid style on the men who had made emergent disbursements without going through the regular forms. Rather a neat thing in this way was the disallowance of the charge for mending a cart at a village smithy, instead of sending it to the nearest field depot. The retrenched officer asked how could the cart be sent on when it had broken down; but as O'V. truly observed, it was no business of our department to answer questions—all we had to do

was to ask them; and this little stroke was much relished on our side of the office, because the offending party belonged to the S. G. Branch, which had condoned the offence. Another ingenious retrenchment was that against an officer for his second-class fare on a railway journey. In vain did the officer protest that his journey was made under proper authority. That was not the point: our objection was, that there was no authority to travel second-class; if he travelled at all, he should have gone first-class. However, we gave in eventually. But perhaps the neatest case of all was that of the cask of rum which, having been damaged by an upset on the moor, was sold by auction at the nearest village. The officer concerned got into a scrape, in the first instance, for not having collected the fluid in spare casks, and sent it back to London, where, as Meddell and Trubbell Soame both remarked in their minutes on the subject, there wouldn't have been a much better market 'in the article. But that was an ever-ministrative question with which we had no concern. The lady in which our branch took extraction was, that there was no voucher any the receipt of the money reg, and by the sale. Not quite undersatisfying myself where the difficulty lay; when the case came before me, I sent for Rueteen, the head-clerk.

"Mr. Rueteen, I don't quite see the force of your objection to this item?"

"There are two objections, sir," said Mr. Rueteen; "in the first place, Mr. Commissary Twozellus has laid himself open to animadversion by receiving this money without authority; but I waive that: the point I take exception to is, that there is no sufficient evidence of receipt of the money to satisfy the Audit Department."

"But he acknowledges the receipt

of the money in his own cash account! What better evidence can you possibly want? Surely he would not have done so if he had not really got it?"

"It has always been held by the Audit Department," said Mr. Rueteen, solemnly, "and I hold the principle to be a thoroughly sound one, that when money is received on behalf of the Secretary of State, there should be at least one independent voucher in support of the item."

"But what better voucher can you possibly have than the receiving officer's own acknowledgment for the money?"

"But the radical principles of audit, sir, assume that there should be a correspondence of independent vouchers."

"Precisely so; and if an officer pays money away, of course you require the receipt of the party who has been paid; but you can't expect the buyer in this case to surrender the receipt which has been supplied and whom."

of the. Rueteen was silent for a crazy in, looking mild, but firm, as compiling.s to say, "Your position here which gave that I should treat you with statistics, but I am aware that it is food dur,ss to make you understand hundred things; you are altogether way, any young and inexperienced." I the other on.

long "It seems to be overlooked, Mr. Rueteen, that the Commissary is in fact his own auditor in this case.

For if he had not reported the sale of the rum, we should have known nothing about it. It seems rather hard upon him, that when we trust him so far, we should not take his word when he says he has received the money. Suppose he had omitted to credit the sales altogether, we should have been none the wiser. What would you have done then?"

"The matter would possibly in that case have not come before us at

all," replied my venerable friend; "but I have always held, and still do hold, that when money is received on behalf of the Secretary of State, an independent voucher should be recorded in proof of the transaction."

Eventually, if I recollect rightly, this little case was amicably adjusted; but I felt that I had lost ground in Mr. Rueteen's estimation, as in that of the office generally, by my laxity of sentiments.

But my attention was just now temporarily diverted from these interesting matters by more mundane affairs. It only wanted a couple of weeks to the time fixed for Sybil's departure, when the decisive letter arrived which was to determine whether she might stay with us or must go out to India; for of course Mrs. Barton did not telegraph her reply to our application, although she wrote by return of post. The reply was what I expected. Her mother and "Joe" were longing to see their dear child, whose coming had already been delayed a year longer than usual, all her sisters having gone out when they were eighteen. Moreover, it would be better to pay for the passage while the money was to be got, for there was no saying where it was to come from by-and-by, now that Joe insisted on taking leave to the hills every season, and sacrificing half his salary; so she enclosed a remittance for the passage-money, and begged that I would arrange to send darling Sybil out by the first steamer for which an escort could be found.

It so happened that our Kissengen acquaintance, Mrs. Featherstone, was about to start in a fortnight, accompanying her husband back to India, on the expiration of his furlough, with her two daughters. For the last ten years the family had been divided, Mrs. Featherstone presiding over the household at Brighton, and her hus-

band furnishing from India the remittances which kept the establishment going, and renewing his acquaintance with the members of it by an occasional run home. Latterly they had become quite united again, Mr. Featherstone having been enjoying a two years' furlough, on the expiration of which it had been arranged that his wife and daughters should return with him to India, the house in Brighton being disposed of, and the boys placed in charge of a gentleman and his wife who make the care of Indian children their peculiar study. The voyagers now kindly proposed that Sybil should join their party at Southampton, whither I accompanied her on the day fixed for the sailing of the steamer.

The same steamer carried back my friend Brodie of the Public Works service, accompanied by his sister. Miss Brodie, whose magnificent head of hair (which had attained a prodigious development since our last meeting) gave her a quite juvenile appearance, explained to us that she had been persuaded by Jamie into paying India a short visit, but she was sure nothing would induce her to stop for more than a year in such a horrid country; she had certainly made sufficient provision for her brief visit in the shape of a piano, and a general outfit comprised in about ten large packing-cases. Poor Mrs. Brodie, with whom I travelled back to town, for her part evidently regarded the parting as a final one; but she was full of her son's goodness and liberality, and her hopes for a happy future for Jesse in India. There was no opening for girls in their quiet Scottish home, she said; the little town was full of old maids already. She was old herself; and although it would be lonely work living without her dear girl, better so than that her girl should be left alone in the world

after she was gone. Thus spake the poor old lady, sorrowful but resigned, as I handed her into the cab which conveyed her to the lodgings where she was to pass the night, going down the next morning to her native Scottish village, to spend there the rest of her solitary days, finding peace of mind in the consciousness of self-sacrifice and the prosperity of her two children.

Eva came up to town with Sybil for the last fortnight which the latter had to spend in England, and the next day after their arrival Tom Strickland paid them a long visit; and when I came home from office, the three were engaged in singing trios—the gentleman playing the accompaniment, and the sisters standing one on each side of the piano—an amusement resumed after dinner, which, by the way, was not more than half an hour late on this occasion. There must be something in this, I thought. A man like Strickland, who professes to be in a state of perpetual boredom in every sort of society, would never show himself so ready to devote a whole evening to a young lady if there was not special attraction. Not that his manner expressed any particular tenderness of feeling, and he did not appear to be more attentive to one sister than the other; but that might be easily explained. A man like Strickland, bordering on middle age, would not show his feelings like younger fellows. The only thing that distinctly bore on the point was a remark he threw out during dinner, that he would like to go to India, only that Guardsmen were practically prevented from exchanging. And as I sat in a corner while the music was renewed after dinner, I speculated on the course things would take if he did actually make Sybil an offer. Should I be justified in detaining her in England, pending consent of her

parents to the marriage? No; it would clearly be better in such case that he should follow her to India, and bring his bride back. This would be a test of the strength of his feelings. It would be strange, too, if a man of his age and temperament were caught by a young girl; for Sybil, although so tall and womanly-looking, was still almost a child in mind. To this speculation succeeded doubts about the suitability of such a marriage. Good-tempered and good-natured as were both Strickland and my sister-in-law, there was hardly any other point of affinity between this hard-headed sarcastic man of the world and the simple-minded Sybil. But all these speculations proved baseless; for although Strickland, before leaving, made an appointment to escort the ladies the next day to the city, and he paid frequent visits to the house during the fortnight that Sybil stayed with

us, no declaration was made, and, indeed, no parting ever came off, for he was summoned to a court-martial at Windsor a day or two before Eva and I started for Southampton. Nor could I guess from her manner what her feelings were in the matter. The poor child wept bitterly when she left Leatherby, before coming to town, at parting with her aunts; and the two sisters took leave of each other in the house by Queen's Gate with mutual tears; but by the time we reached Southampton she had recovered from her sorrow, and in the bustle of embarkation on the steamer's crowded deck, amid the excitement of the scene and greetings from her friends, she seemed quite in high spirits. Poor child! another home awaited her beyond the sea, and the unknown and indefinite future lay before her, a prospect for the young always full of charms.

CHAPTER XLIII.—VIRTUE REWARDED.

It was not many weeks after Sybil's departure, and our establishment in Pall Mall was peacefully engaged in its usual routine, undisturbed save by the mild periodic excitement of framing the annual estimates, while I regarded my own state of mind with a sort of lazy wonder, as I found myself gradually subsiding into an easy-going official hack, the grand visions of my day-dreams all unfulfilled, and even the sense of uneasiness at my official shortcomings almost lulled to sleep, when I was suddenly aroused from this torpid condition by an interesting event.

My first intimation of this came from Colonel Murphy. That able officer had apparently never been able to overcome his sense of personal injury at my appointment to

the Paymaster-Generalship — anticipating his prediction of my political success by a dozen years; and so, although we belonged to the same office, we rather avoided each other, a thing easy to do, as our work lay in different lines. But we occasionally met at the Union Jack, and on this occasion my gallant friend came across the coffee-room to the table at which I was lunching, evidently with the object of telling me something.

The secret soon came out. "This is a nice step for Bracton, isn't it, and quite in his line too?"

Murphy saw by my look of surprise that his bolt had hit the mark. He had the pleasure of being the first to tell me that Bracton was made President of the Pauperism Commission—a piece of news he

conveyed with an air of condescending glibness, as much as to say, "You see how little you are thought of in the office, although you *are* head of a department, that you are not told of these things."

But this was not all my friend had to say. There was another dart to be fired off, which he at once proceeded to discharge. "Hanged if I know, too, who they will find to put in his place. Bracton's, a precious clever fellow; and although this sort of work wasn't perhaps much in his line, still he was a dab at moving the estimates, and that sort of thing; spoke well, too. The Liberal party are clean used up, in my opinion—not a single rising man among the whole lot. Lord Lambs-wool would do, but then you see they must have the Under-Secretary in the Commons as long as Lord Stowe remains War Minister. I expect they will have to bring in an under-secretary from one of the other departments."

Murphy was, I think, puzzled, as he walked away, why I laughed. Could he have made a bad shot? and was it really possible that, after all, I was behind the scenes, and knew more about the matter than he did? My ignorance, however, was in reality not assumed; but I could not help smiling, partly at the obvious device, partly because Murphy appeared to fancy that his depreciation of my claims might really have some effect in determining the reversion of the vacant appointment.

A more serious indication of the tendency of opinion was, that Lord Stowe, when he sent for me to his room an hour later on a small matter of business, made no allusion to the impending vacancy. Bracton himself came into my room shortly afterward to announce his preference.

"I have got a piece of news for you, West."

"I fancy I have heard it already, if it is something you are to be congratulated on."

"How so? Who told you?"

"Colonel Murphy, at my club, just now."

"Ah, by the way, I did give him a hint about it this morning, when he was in my room, but I ought to have told him it was in confidence. Yes, I am going to the Pauperism Commission. I should have liked to stay on in this shop very well, but I saw it was no good trying to do anything with old Stowe at the head of it. And of course it will be pleasanter to be top-sawyer again, although in a smaller department; and then there is the higher pay, which, as I ain't a Cræsus, is an object. To be sure, my re-election will be a ticklish affair; my respected constituents are a precious rum set of customers, and no mistake; and I can't say I look forward to the pleasure of meeting them again one bit, and that's a fact. They can't understand that a fellow in office ain't quite so free to talk as he was when he was an independent member. They're always casting up what they call my pledges in my teeth. Blessed if I ever give any pledges again. However, I shall make room for you."

"I am not so sure of that. At any rate I have heard nothing about it, which looks as if the Government had other intentions."

"Oh, they must appoint you; there isn't a single chap about the Government with any claims to come in over your head in that way, who would care to look at the post."

"Yes; but what chance should I have, any more than you, of doing anything useful, if the head of the office is not prepared to do anything?"

"Oh, but the case is different. You have all the knowledge cut and

dried for going ahead with ; whereas I don't mind saying that I don't know much more about the army now than I did when I came here, and what is more, I don't find that I care much more about it. No, no ; you can claim the appointment practically, for they can't afford to let you go into Opposition. You have got the gift of the gab, you know, and could make yourself darned unpleasant in Opposition, and they know it too."

"I am afraid the appointment would be unpleasant to the office in any case. I am not very popular with the heads of departments now, and should be still less so as Under-Secretary, I fear."

"Unpopular ? What does that matter ? So am I always unpopular, and always shall be, but I have my way notwithstanding, and get what I want done. Bless me, you should have seen what a precious row there was at the Colliery Board when I cut down the allowance of red tape ! Old Wregistre, the head-clerk, wanted to memorialise the Treasury : he said he had been forty years in the service, and had never been stinted in red tape before ; but I stuck to my orders, and put every man jack of them on an allowance of twelve ounces a-year, and very soon heard no more of it."

At this point happily an interruption occurred to our conversation, for this criticism of our chief was hardly decorous, nor did I accept the notion of unpopularity with the philosophical indifference of my friend.

The settlement of the vacancy remained doubtful for some days. The Prime Minister, as I afterwards learned, had proposed at once to offer me the vacant appointment, but Lord Stowe objected on the ground that I should be troublesome. I do not know how far the final decision may have been influenced by it, but my old friend the *Overseer*, in its weekly epigrammatic summary of news, while certifying that the Right Honourable John Bracton was advanced from the Under-Secretaryship of the War Department to his new appointment, and that the paupers would now have their turn of flagellation, added that of course the vacancy thus created would fall to Captain West. That at first promising but latterly indolent young official would now have an opportunity of winning his spurs. However that may be, Lord Stowe communicated to me one day that the Premier had authorised him to invite me to accept the vacant appointment, adding, in a pretty little speech, something about his satisfaction at the well-deserved advancement. But it is almost impossible to disguise one's sympathies, and my chief failed to conceal the feeling that the appointment was not really to his liking.

To his apparent surprise, I asked for time to consider the proposal, and going to my room wrote a note to Mr. Merrifield, requesting an interview. He invited me, in reply, to breakfast with him the next morning at his house in Craven Square, that being the only time at which he was disengaged.

CHAPTER XLV.—DRY BUT IMPORTANT.

The Minister's breakfast-hour was nine, and he always joined Lady Elizabeth and his daughter at that meal, however late his engagements

might have been the previous night—or morning. When, after it was concluded, we found ourselves alone, I opened the conversation. "I

thought it would be best," I said, "to trouble you with a few minutes' conversation before definitely replying to the offer you have done me the honour to make. You may perhaps remember the conversations we had about army reform while down at Arrowdown. It will be pretty plain from what I said then that I have strong views on the subject, and the main object I should have before me in taking the higher office would be to endeavour to carry them out. Now, of course it is useless to think of such schemes unless the Government, and especially the head of the Government, is prepared to support them. So I have ventured to waive etiquette, and to ask you the question, how far you are prepared to adopt any proposals of this sort, provided Lord Stowe is ready, on their being unfolded, to bring them forward?"

The Premier leaned back in his chair thoughtfully, his elbows on the arms, the tips of his fingers balanced against each other. At last he said—

"Your programme, if I recollect rightly, was a pretty extensive one, and involved a general reorganisation of everything. Am I to understand that you make it a condition of taking up the Under-Secretaryship that we are to back up all the schemes for improving or altering the army which you may be prepared to devise?" and the Minister looked somewhat sarcastic.

"No, Mr. Merrifield; please understand me. I am quite aware of the absurdity of a mere understrapper of the Government appearing to propose conditions on taking up a subordinate office, but still I feel that I should be doing more harm than good if trying to push on reforms when no one was prepared to aid in the matter. I should be dissatisfied with the position myself, and some person who feels less

strongly on the subject would be better suited to the post, if nothing is to be done in it. He would give less trouble, and things would run more smoothly. But I did think and hope that the Government would be glad of an opportunity of gaining the credit to be got by undertaking a comprehensive scheme of army reform, to say nothing of the benefit to the country of once and for all putting our military administration on a sound footing."

"What does Lord Stowe say to all your schemes? Have you discussed them with him?"

"Lord Stowe is, I should hope, as patriotic as the rest of his countrymen, and certainly I should suppose he is as fully alive as other people to the personal advantage that would accrue from being associated with the successful carrying out of a great national measure." This was a delicate way of saying that I hoped he would be ready to behave like a not altogether obstructive dummy. But, in fact, this part of the conversation was a rather delicate one. I could not say that I thought my chief was an old humbug; besides, Mr. Merrifield must have long ago taken the measure of his colleague.

"But your schemes, I take it, even supposing they are such as would commend themselves to the Government—upon which point I am not prepared at present to give any opinion one way or the other—your schemes look as if they would cut out work enough to last for half-a-dozen sessions. What Ministry can expect in these days to hold out so long? And have you at all considered the effort involved, the mental and bodily strain, of carrying through such a task? Understand me. I desire administrative reform as much as any man, and I hope I appreciate official zeal and earnestness among my colleagues at its proper value; but we are merely

human beings, my dear Captain West, and the limit of capacity is soon reached, at any rate in Parliament." And the Minister's face assumed a jaded aspect as he spoke, and I thought I could read in the lines of his fine countenance the records of weary days and nights, of needless obstructions, and wranglings and debating; furrows worn by the friction—the ever-increasing friction—of government by Parliaments and parties.

"One thing at least," I replied, "can be done, which will provoke no opposition; which need involve no trouble or labour except to the persons immediately concerned—the officials of the War Office; which indeed, so far from provoking opposition, would be sure to command universal approbation; and that is the decentralisation of the department and our whole system of military administration. This really great measure, should be, I venture to think, the proper precursor of all other army reforms; at any rate, it can be carried out quite independently of them; and although a great measure, it is in reality one mainly of details, and to a great extent a technical question. It turns, in fact, on accounts."

I trembled as I said this, for I knew by experience how at the very word "accounts" most listeners, like human snails, would draw in their horns and cease to pay attention any longer to what was said. If you began to talk about estimates and accounts to Lord Stowe, he at once assumed an attitude of vacant abstraction—looking through you as if his dear Sophia and the rest of his girls were exactly a hundred miles behind your chair. Even Bracton, shrewd, hard-headed man of business as he was, could not be got to go into details of accounts. For Burley, indeed, the subject possessed a sort of fascina-

tion, although I don't think he understood much about it; but with him accounts signified merely a vehicle for foisting some new return on the army, wherein the columns on the bottom of the page should give one set of facts, and those at the side another. But this was one of the qualities which, almost as much as his other great gifts, gave Mr. Merrifield his superiority over all other public men of his time—his mastery over details. At the word "accounts" the languid expression passed away from his features; he brightened up and looked quite interested; and thus encouraged, I plunged at once into my subject.

This was the point, I said, which I had been so anxious to explain to him when I was honoured by the conversation we had together in the autumn on Arrowdown, but unfortunately the opportunity slipped away. That decentralisation should be the aim of every army reformer was generally admitted, but no one, so far as I knew, had yet pointed out how it could be effected. All those schemes which had been put forward for localising the army were very well as far as they went, but they did not go to the bottom of the matter. We might imitate the German system in externals, and map out the country into military divisions, each with its permanent army corps—an arrangement, by the way, utterly unsuited to our condition of colonial service; but this at best would be only an external imitation. There is no good in multiplying staffs and departments if you do not give them authority; and yet it would be found that these local commanders and local staffs, should such come to be appointed, would have, and could have, no virtual responsibility. For the system of estimates and accounts now in force assumes a com-

plete centralisation of initiating power within the War Office; and we may construct local arsenals and establish local magazines, but until the system of our accounts and estimates is altered, there can be no real effective decentralisation. For this there must first be a complete reconstruction of the system of estimates. The whole reform, as I conceived, really turned on that. "Let me explain what I mean by taking a case," said I, unfolding the estimates of the year, which I had brought with me in a despatch-box, in case the Premier should not have a copy at hand; "any item will do. At page 48, for example, we have 'Cost of Forage, and allowances in lieu, £448,889,' made up of 'General Staff, £15,556,' 'Control Staff, £5791,' and so on. Well now, the result of bringing these items together in one lump for the whole army is, that every item to be expended against each of these sums must be referred to some one central authority who keeps the whole account in his hands. If during the year any additional claims arise in respect of forage, for example, it has to be referred to the central office. The authorities in Ireland or Scotland, or anywhere else, cannot authorise any additional expenditure against a grant, however trifling, because they do not know whether the effect of such excess may not be to cause an excess over the aggregate sum provided. The only parties who can pronounce on the matter are those who know what is the total expenditure recorded against the vote—in other words, the accountants in Pall Mall. It is the same with every other item of army expenditure—fuel, rates, travelling expenses, purchase of stores, clothing, manufactures, everything. The whole system assumes that there should be one central office where all the threads are gathered up, and

where the expenditure that is going on all over the world should be collected and recorded against the different votes; and that all officials at a distance should be kept in complete ignorance as to what the effect of their expenditure may be upon the estimates generally. So long as this system is maintained decentralisation is impossible. Decentralisation means the delegation of authority; but any proposal of this sort is at once met by the objection that the expenditure could not in such case be checked by the estimates. And the men who urge this objection have really at last got to think that it is unanswerable, and that the estimates in their present form are in the nature of things unalterable, so blinded do men become by working in routine.

"But further, even if the procedure in force did not call for alteration as a preliminary to reform in administration, it ought, I submit, to be altered, because the estimates in their present form are intrinsically defective. There is a great show of information and detail about them, but in reality they supply a minimum of either. The popular notion is, that this detail is furnished for the benefit of members of Parliament. It would be more correct to assume that they are made up in their present form in view to bewildering members of Parliament, and concealing the facts. What are the emoluments of any given official,—say, for example, a controller? You cannot find out from the estimates. The 'pay proper,' indeed, is given, but the 'allowances' of the whole Control Department are lumped together—the forage in one item, the fuel in another, rates and taxes in another, and so on; so that the total emoluments of any one officer, either in that or any other department, can nowhere be ascertained. It is just the same with the estimates of the

manufacturing departments. What can a member of Parliament possibly predicate from the item of £29,000 for 'Piece-work' under the head Clothing, or from the fact that £40,000 is going to be spent in saltpetre, and £188,000 in purchase of metals? What he and everybody else would like to know is the cost of coats and greatcoats and other items of clothing, and the number to be made during the year; the quantity of gunpowder to be manufactured, and its cost per barrel; and so on for other articles. On all these points the estimates do not give him a particle of information. They are useless even for the manufacturing departments themselves; because as the same official seldom deals with an article throughout all its stages, he has not the means of watching the account. One man buys the saltpetre, another converts it into gunpowder; neither of them, therefore, knows the whole cost of the operation. It is the same with every other branch of any manufacture. The only people who have the means of ascertaining the whole of the facts are the accountants in the central office; and they, being at a distance from the scene of operations, possibly do not understand what are necessarily complicated transactions, and if they attempt to bring out prices and results, simply make a muddle of it.

"My view, therefore, is, that the estimates should be entirely recast in form. The general estimates should be framed to show the expenditure locally, so that the general officers commanding districts should know what is the expenditure sanctioned for their respective districts, and then the supply officers under them would really be able to control the expenditure, and their functions would bear some sort of relation to their titles. The same sort of change should be ex-

tended to all supply branches and to the manufacturing departments; that is to say, the votes should be distributed by disbursers instead of by services, as in fact is now done in the Works branch, the only one in which the estimates are framed on a sound principle. In that branch the estimates do not bring together the outlay of bricks, or lime, or timber throughout the British empire; but the cost of each work is shown separately, and therefore in the case of that branch only is there the means of enforcing local responsibility. What is needed is to extend that system to the other branches of army expenditure. Such a change would not interfere with the system of votes, or appropriations, or audit, or anything else that is implied in Parliamentary government; on the contrary, the control of Parliament would really become much more complete and effective than it is now, because members would then be able to find out what is the real cost of each part of the army; in place of the mystification which now wraps up the army expenditure, we should have real simplicity.

"Further, the audit should be local as well as the expenditure. By this I do not mean that it should not come under the scrutiny of the central authority, but that the auditors, instead of sitting in Pall Mall and returning detailed accounts and vouchers, sent up in waggon-loads from all parts of the empire, involving a great expense in copying, and endless correspondence in references and calls for explanations, which after all can often not be made clear to people at a distance ignorant of the nature of the transactions: instead of this, the accounts should, as far as possible, be audited on the spot where the expenditure takes place, by auditors either permanently detached, or sent out from time to time from the War Department. By this plan no-

thing would be sacrificed in accuracy or speed of accounting, to set off against the resulting saving in correspondence and expense. Not the least of the benefits would be the education thus given to the officers concerned—by which I mean the whole of my department, senior and junior clerks and all, who, never seeing anything now of the army except on paper, and passing their lives in the dull routine of mechanical tasks, come often to perform them in a dull, unintelligent way. Auditors are not in the nature of things more stupid than other people: it is their training which brings them to do their work in the aggravating way now so often manifested—to mistake the form for the essence of the work. The head of another great audit department told me that his difficulties arose not so much from the shortcomings of the officials whose accounts he had to audit, as from the perversity of his own people, misunderstanding the points about which they ought to exercise their judgment, and causing needless irritation by foolish references. Judging from my own experience, I can quite understand it.

“But the main advantage to be claimed for this scheme has yet to be stated. It would be equally suitable for war and peace. And that surely is the point to be aimed at in all military administration, yet it is just where our present system fails. Of course there must be greater laxity on active service than is permissible in peace time, but we might surely contrive a mode of doing business which should in a general way be the type on which army administration should be conducted under all circumstances. If, for example, army finance and administration were localised in the way I have indicated, each army corps—or whatever the administrative unit may be called—having its

own civil staff, trained in peace time to all the functions which have to be exercised in war—pay, supply, audit, financial control really so called: then if this corps were sent on active service, the functionaries who accompanied it would carry with them into the field the experience they had gained in the exercise of independent responsibility; and that experience would beget what I may call financial self-possession, a quality which has hitherto been utterly wanting to our spending departments in the field. This surely would be an improvement on the present condition of things, when the centralised, inflexible control exercised by the central department in peace is perforce abandoned on the outbreak of war, to be succeeded by a state of wild confusion, when rules of every kind are thrown to the winds, and those who have never been allowed to spend anything rush to the other extreme, and pour out money like water. This has happened before on every occasion of war, and is sure to happen again. It is the inevitable tendency of a thoroughly centralised system such as ours to go on ever centralising; piling up checks and forms in search of an ideal perfection of supervision, till when the machine comes under the rough usage of war it breaks down from its own weight and complexity. War is a brutally rough exercise at best, and we can hardly make our apparatus too simple or too elastic, if we mean it to stand the strain.”

But all these reforms, I submitted, would come short of what was necessary unless supplemented by another radical change of system. “The War Department, as now constituted, should be dismantled, and broken up into a number of smaller separate offices. The theory of the present concentration, is, no doubt, to avoid correspondence and delay in de-

spatch of business; but the point of concentration may easily be carried too far, and then instead of simplicity you get complexity and confusion. Anybody may see this by supposing, as an extreme case, all the different departments of the Government, which are now conducted as separate establishments, to be amalgamated into one office. You might thus save something in the registering of letters, and in porters and messengers, perhaps even in correspondence; but it is easy to perceive that an office of such a sort would become utterly unwieldy and unmanageable. It may be urged, perhaps, that the cases are not analogous, for that all these different departments have no connection with each other, and little need for intercommunication, whereas the different branches of the War Department are all engaged upon the same operation, the business of the army. But in fact there is no necessary communication between many of the different subdivisions of the War Office—between the Commissariat and the Works branches, for example. Free communication should be encouraged between heads of departments no doubt, but beyond a certain point concentration and centralisation tend rather to the obstruction than to the despatch of business.

"This, however, is a minor point. The main objection to the present arrangement is that it involves over-centralisation of the worst form. All authority being vested in the Secretary of State, no proper responsibility is exercised by the various heads of executive departments. The unhealthy fiction set up is, that the former administers every branch of the army directly in his own person, delegating no authority to any subordinate officials, and being alone responsible for the conduct of all business trans-

acted by them down to the minutest details. In pursuance of this fiction, every order issued from the office goes forth in the name of the Secretary of State; every letter that comes in is addressed to the under-secretary, as if intended to be laid before his chief. Thus the authority, not to say the very existence, of the heads of departments, even the Parliamentary as well as the permanent officers who really dispose of nine-tenths of the work, is entirely ignored. There is, of course, a private understanding within the office that certain cases shall be disposed of by these officers and others sent up for orders, but the limits of authority are very vaguely defined; and this is at most a responsibility exercised as between the head of an office and his subordinates: recognised responsibility to Parliament and the country there is none.

"The mischievous effect of this fiction crops up at every point. For example, this constant employment of the Secretary of State's name upon the most trifling references—matters about which he cannot be, and, from the nature of the case, ought not to be, concerned—tends rather to weaken than to strengthen his authority. Men outside the office feel that they are not really contending with him, but with some subordinate using his name; in short, we have a perpetual sham.

"It tends to create a degree of undue interference with the executive officers of the army, carried on under the ægis of the Minister's name by officials whose own identity does not appear on the record; interference which they would hesitate to exercise avowedly in their own persons. Make heads of departments specifically responsible for all the business they transact, and they will cease to worry other people. Simplification and

reduction of work are sure to follow.

"It is, of course, fatal to the efficiency of the executive departments. Take a case which may be fresh in recollection. A regiment marches from one country town to another—of course under orders issued direct from Pall Mall—and the provisions which ought to have been supplied on the way are not forthcoming. A row is got up about it; questions are asked in the House; inquiry is made; and it is found that there is really no one to come down upon. All the orders in the case have slipped through under the initials of the Minister, and the only person on whom responsibility can be fixed, if it is to be fixed on any one, is himself. Thus the very people who want most to be looked after, the heads of the executive departments, are the very men who escape all responsibility, except the indirect responsibility of a clerk to the head of his office.

"But still more, the tendency of all this centralisation is to render the direct interference of the War Minister, real or nominal, far too minute and prominent. It is said sometimes that his control over all branches of the army is not sufficiently established. I maintain, on the contrary, that it is carried much too far. What between the pressure of Parliament in one direction, always looking to him for information and explanation, and the natural tendency of officials trained as ours are to shrink from responsibility and refer everything to their chief, the latter has practically usurped functions which, from the nature of the case, he cannot fulfil properly. Take the late autumn manœuvres for example. These are supposed to be an imitation of war procedure, so far as imitation is possible, and yet what could be more unlike? And we have gone out of our way to make

it so. Every little trifling detail has been carried out in our office in the name, real or assumed, of the War Minister; and then, when every arrangement is complete, and the troops are assembled, a couple of elderly generals are picked out from the reserve list and put down to play with the troops for a fortnight, and then sent home again. Could anything be more unlike actual war? In fact, our office ought to be called the Peace Department rather than the War Department, for this sort of interference is only possible during peace; business could not be carried on in this sort of way for an hour in war time. Were it a case of real war, the department would have to be content with providing the supplies and leaving all management to the generals; but what chance have our generals of being found equal to the occasion if always kept in leading strings? We have heard a great deal about the creditable labours of our office in preparing for the manœuvres; we ought to be ashamed rather than proud of them, for we ought by rights to have had nothing to do with them. There is really no more reason why the War Office should interfere directly with the local supply officers in the performance of their duties, than that it should take their commands away from the colonels of battalions.

"I conceive, then, that the War Minister, or the officer acting in his name, should be much less of an executive head than he has now got by degrees to become. His business should be rather to supervise others than to act himself. And the first step towards this is to break up the Office; to detach the different heads of executive departments and their establishment, and make them exercise their functions on their own responsibility, reducing the War Department proper to the under

secretaries and the necessary staff of clerks.

"Of course this change could not be made without trouble. It would be immediately discovered as a first result that the powers of these different officials need to be distinctly defined, because, as I have explained, at present they have no recognised authority, but exercise their functions solely in the name of the Secretary of State. The first thing needed, then, would be a distinct code of regulations, defining the duties of each department and the powers of its head, as well as of the officials subordinate to him. This in itself will at once lead to a vast reduction of correspondence, because substituting certitude for the present indefinite relations between all parties concerned. But this is a minor point, although a great reform in its way. The main object in view should be to distribute authority, and to train all branches of the army to the exercise of responsibility."

Such is an outline of the plans I submitted to Mr. Merrifield, who listened with great attention, occasionally throwing in a remark, or asking a question for further elucidation.

When I had finished speaking, he observed that it was a pretty big scheme; had I spoken to Lord Stowe about it?

I replied that I had not. It seemed useless to discuss the matter with him before ascertaining whether the proposal would be likely to be agreeable to himself and the Government generally. All that Lord Stowe could say would be that he would consult him (Mr. Merrifield) and the Cabinet, so I thought it better to come at once to the fountain-head and see whether there was any reasonable chance of views being accepted.

"But surely you cannot expect

me or any other man to swallow all that screed of doctrine at once, not to say anything of the great schemes you shadowed forth when we were staying at Strickland's, for upsetting everything generally."

"I think Mr. Merrifield is hardly the person to sneer at schemes which savour of the subversive."

"Excuse me. I had no intention of sneering, and if I appeared so ill-mannered, must apologise. But, my dear Captain West, you must see the impossibility of my ever assenting to the propriety of your schemes, still less committing the Government to any pledge to adopt them, merely on such a statement as you have favoured me with, and that too even before the minister of the department has been consulted. You must see that such a proposal is, to say the least, somewhat unreasonable."

"Pray do not suppose that I meant anything so more than unreasonable, so utterly absurd. All that I can expect or ask is to be able to carry you with me, if ever my schemes arrive at the point of assuming a definite form, and of their being of a sort to approve themselves to your judgment."

Mr. Merrifield replied that any schemes brought under his consideration would of course command careful attention.

This, however, I explained, was not exactly what I wanted. Proposals brought before the Government by a member of the Government—even a subordinate one—would of course be looked at. I knew that. But the case was really this. Without wishing to prescribe conditions, which would be absurd for an Under-Secretary, I might say that I should only care to undertake office with the object of assisting to carry out what I conceived to be reforms. To enter on it with any other object

would be merely to give trouble to no purpose. What, then, I really desired, was to know whether he thought my ideas on the subject reasonable and feasible, so far as I had explained them?

Mr. Merrifield replied that he thought (speaking of course under reservation) there was unquestionably a good deal in my proposals that seemed very ingenious, and possibly that might prove very beneficial; "but," he added, smiling, and yet with a look of weariness passing over his face, called up, I fancied, by the spectres of long days and nights wasted in fruitless sittings in the House—"but, my dear Captain West, do you know what such a reform as this means? Young and ardent members never seem to realise the difficulty of carrying out a measure of any sort through Parliament, the impotence of even the strongest Governments to do these things."

I replied that I thought it did not need to be old to see how much friction was involved by our system of government, and how large were the powers of obstruction of even those members who were good for nothing else. "But, on the other hand," I continued, "it seems to me that Governments are always strongest when they are dealing with strong measures. As I took the liberty of observing when we discussed the subject before, when you carried your great measure on the law of entail, how irresistible you were! while on that miserable little question whether children under fourteen should be allowed to buy more than a pint of malt liquor at a time, or again, whether the school boards should face their buildings in stucco, —why, all party bonds seemed to be dissevered, and we could not be sure of a majority from one day to another. Could there," I went on to say, "be a surer card to play for keeping our party in, to put the

case on its lowest grounds, than to come forward with a bold scheme of army reform,—supposing, of course, that it commends itself to the general approbation of the country?"

"I confess your scheme would have even greater attractions, West, if it were a sure card to play for turning our party out." And the Minister yawned languidly, while the jaded look I had noticed before again passed over his face.

This was the first symptom I had noticed in the great Minister of that fatigue of office which so often attacks our statesmen. Hitherto, and especially during our visit to the Stricklands, he had always manifested a thorough zest for official life, and even the wear and tear of Parliamentary wrangle seemed not to produce any sense of distress in him as it did in other people. Perhaps in the quiet time before the session began, his heart failed him at the prospect of coming strife more than it would do when the sound of battle actually arose; for Mr. Merrifield was emphatically a Parliamentary war-horse, and when the trumpet of debate sounded, would be sure to rush gaily into the battle.

"If we are to be turned out," I observed, "at least let us be turned out on some question worthy of being defeated on, instead of expiring of inanition, or under the combined effect of a multitude of petty defeats. But I cannot help believing that in reality our party would really be strengthened immensely by bringing forward such a measure. We should carry the country with us for a certainty; and not only the people who go into efficiency regardless of economy; we should have the economists with us too, Drylands, and Allus Wright, and Rigby Sebright, and that set, because I verily believe that you may make the army both cheaper and more efficient."

Such is an outline of the conversation. The final result was, that Mr. Merrifield arranged for Lord Stowe to meet me at his house a day or two afterwards, when, in the presence of the two Ministers, I unfolded my scheme to the latter.

"What do you think of that for a programme, Stowe?" said Mr. Merrifield, when I had done speaking. "Pretty extensive, is it not? Now, the question is, how far can we support our young friend here? He cuts out plenty of work for you, at any rate."

"Yes," I observed; "but then I should hope that a great measure of this sort, improved as it would be in Lord Stowe's hands, and carried through successfully, would procure the War Minister an undying reputation." I tried to say this gravely, but felt that I seemed to be making fun of Lord Stowe, and that Mr. Merrifield knew that I was doing so; and the mutual consciousness thus set up made us both, I think, a little uncomfortable. But Lord Stowe had no misgivings. He looked more than ever as if he thought he resembled William Pitt as he replied,—“Oh, as for hard work, an old official like me is accustomed to it.” And then he went on to say that the improvement of army administration had ever been one of the objects dearest to him; that he fully recognised

the originality and value of my ideas, and had no doubt he should be able, with the advantage of my help, to introduce many valuable reforms in various parts of the system.

Nothing could at first sight be more satisfactory; but, in fact, Lord Stowe promised too readily, having evidently no clear notion of what was proposed, or of the difficulty involved. However, the agreement tacitly came to furnished me, to all appearance, with the opportunity I wished for. Lord Stowe was to afford me full power of initiation, and to back up all proposals which commended themselves to his judgment; while Mr. Merrifield, who was evidently impressed by the ideas I had put forward, and exhibited a much more lively interest in the matter than Lord Stowe, expressed himself as prepared to support us in the Cabinet. In fact, army reform might very possibly be developed into one of the great schemes of the session. “But we must consult the heads of departments, West, before we do anything,” said his lordship, as we parted in the office lobby; “they have great experience and judgment—Burley especially—and enormous knowledge on these subjects. They will, no doubt, be able to throw a great deal of light on some of these difficult questions, and make them look quite simple.”

CHAPTER XLV.—UNEXPECTED HELP.

A day or two after the events recorded in the last chapter, I met Mr. Strickland in the coffee-room of the Apollo, to which select institution I had lately been elected. He had come up to town thus early with Mrs. Strickland, before the meeting of Parliament, to consult their physician about her health. He of course congratulated me on

my advancement. “You will now be able to set about carrying out some of your pet designs. Without altogether agreeing with you, I shall still be very glad to see you successful; anything must be better than letting things stand still.”

“I am not very sanguine of doing much. The more I see of the working of Governments, the more

difficult it appears to effect anything. The tendency of modern times seems to be towards a general break-down of Ministers from sheer overweight of details and petty obstructions."

"Too true, I fear; it is a melancholy sight to see the whole force of the Government employed night after night to carry some wretched little measure through committee. I never cease to congratulate myself on having resisted the allurements of office. I should not have minded the useful work; it is the work to no purpose that is so irksome."

"Then look at the way in which needless fetters are imposed on our leading men. They get no assistance in their confidential work. A Minister's private secretaries ought to be almost as able as himself, and he ought to be allowed a dozen if he wants them. But the salaries are fixed at a rate about suitable for a junior bank-clerk, so they have to be paid by preference; and whenever any wretched little post is vacant in the permanent Civil Service, the confidential *aide* has to be got rid of, very possibly just when he is about becoming efficient. Even then, perhaps, a cry will be raised about jobbery and patronage. The fact is, Ministers have no patronage nowadays, except bishoprics and things of that sort which they don't care about."

"The whole question of the Civil Service will have to be taken up soon," observed Strickland, "if its character is not to suffer permanent deterioration. I don't say that this has set in yet, but it can hardly be delayed much longer if something is not done to prevent it."

"Are you a disbeliever, then, in the virtue of open competition?"

"I was not thinking of that just now, although, no doubt, the system is mixed up with a lot of tomfoolery. I had in view what is going

on at the top of the Service, rather than the mode of filling it up at the bottom. It is extraordinary to me that Governments—neither our side nor the other—seem to see that the pay of the Civil Service has for the last thirty years been undergoing rapid deterioration, because it is not sharing in the general increase of wealth going on among all other classes. Twelve hundred a-year was a very fine salary at the beginning of the century, when the present scale of emoluments was fixed. But it is a very poor thing now. And yet, instead of accepting the fact of the decline in the value of money, and taking some steps to remedy its effect on the Service, both parties seem to vie with each other in taking every opportunity to cut down the good things of the Service. You can never take up the estimates for any year without seeing a note against some of the higher appointments, that the salary is to be reduced on the next occurrence of a vacancy—as if this were a highly creditable thing to do, instead of a piece of fatuous folly."

"Still the salaries of heads of departments are quite sufficient for comfort."

"That depends on what comfort means. I suspect there is no class in London which finds so much difficulty in making two ends meet. If when this great influx of wealth first began to set in, which you may date from the abolition of the Corn Laws, the salaried and professional classes had taken their stand on their social and mental status, and maintained a frugal style of living, like the clergy, in contrast to the *nouveaux riches*, their position would have been elevated instead of lowered. But, unfortunately, this sort of simplicity is opposed to the genius of the English middle class; at any rate, the attempt was

not made. Everybody must dress and look and dine alike, and the only difference is, that whereas with the commercial classes their increase of profits has kept pace with the more expensive style of living introduced, the people on fixed incomes find an ever-increasing difficulty in maintaining customary appearances. One expense, indeed, they could not avoid, were they ever so frugal—that of education. Now that patronage is closed, a good education is absolutely necessary for boys, if they are to be placed out in the world; and that is a great and increasing difficulty for those who have families.”

“And yet the reputation of the Civil Service has not abated, either for ability or character. On the contrary, I should say it never stood higher in this respect than it does now.”

“Very true; and heaven grant the day may never come when any deterioration sets in! But what seems to me to have taken place already is, that the abler of the members have begun to take systematically to other ways of earning money. All my friends in the public service seem to have other irons in the fire. They bring out plays, or edit books, or write for the papers. Of course they do their proper work too; and, no doubt, pursuits of this sort, carried on to a reasonable extent, improve a man's efficiency rather than otherwise; they lift him above the ruts of office drudgery. But I think the time may perhaps come when men will look to these things more as a systematic means of eking out a livelihood, and less as a mere recreation for leisure time, and be driven for sheer want of money to give the best of their talents to private business, and merely the fag-end of it to their official duties; and this will be a very bad thing for the Government and the country. When a man who

has to draft a despatch on which peace or war turns, is under bonds to deliver so many sheets of his novel to the printer on the same day, it may fare badly with the despatch, I fear.”

“Talking of the difficulty about Ministers getting help, I find this difficulty very forcibly in my way just now. Young Roundhand, my private secretary, is a very good little fellow, methodical, and obliging, and intelligent, and all that sort of thing; but his practical experience of the army has been limited to looking on now and then at the Palace-guard mounting hard by. It is the same, of course, with the whole Office—all very good fellows, and many of them very able men, but they look at the army through official spectacles. I have applied for an additional private secretary, a military man, but I shall give offence to the Office, I fear, and very likely cause a row in the House, for there is no precedent for an Under-Secretary having two *aides*.”

The next morning after this conversation I received a visit from Mr. Strickland while we were at breakfast; or, rather, while I was at breakfast, for Eva seldom came down in time to share that meal.

“Excuse this early call,” he said, “and still more the liberty I am going to take; but I thought I would unburden my mind of my purpose at once. You want a military man as private secretary. Why not give Tom a trial?”

“Tom Strickland?”

“Why not? He is clever enough, I am sure, though I am his father.”

“Clever enough! I should think he was. But the idea of Tom being anybody's private secretary, much less mine, would certainly have never occurred to me.”

“Nor to me either in ordinary course; but it came across me sud-

denly after I saw you yesterday. The fact is, as I daresay you may have discovered for yourself before this, Tom has caused his mother and myself a great deal of anxiety from first to last, and we are both very anxious to see him settle down to steady work of some kind. He may have to wait a long time before he steps into my shoes; and, besides, he won't be fit to play the country gentleman if he goes on idling much longer, or worse. His life has been a failure so far. Clever as he is, he has done nothing except spend money and health. He is tired of mere soldiering, and is too old to go into any other line. Now if he got into the War Office, and had something to interest him in his profession, it might give a new turn altogether. A bout of official life would do him an immense deal of good; and if he took to the work kindly, as I really believe he would, I am sure you would find him very efficient."

"I have not the least doubt of that; and I quite believe with you that official life would be the very thing for him; but surely this would be beginning at the wrong end. I should be afraid that he would be too clever for this sort of thing. Why, your son is one of the cleverest men in London. He ought to be his secretary instead of he being mine. I never could understand, indeed, why you did not bring him into Parliament. With his talents and position he might rise to anything. I should feel a mere political adventurer in comparison with him."

"Yes, you may well ask that. I wanted him to stand for South Yewcestershire many years ago, just after he came of age; and I believe we should have brought him in easily, but he was full of horse-racing then, and tomfoolery of all sorts, and declared that the age of

professional politicians had gone by (you know his sneering way); and since then he has got into disfavour down there, and we had words about it; and so time has passed on, and the result is that my boy is just what you see—clever enough, and good at bottom, I verily believe, but simply throwing his life away, and getting on towards middle age without ever having done anything, except, as I said, spending money, and giving trouble to his family;" and as he finished his sentence, Mr. Strickland's face assumed a careworn aspect, and he seemed to look older and more haggard than I had ever seen him look before.

I had heard at odd times, more by allusion than direct information, something of Captain Strickland's antecedents. Heir to a fine estate and one of the oldest names in the country, he had gone up to Christchurch with a great reputation for ability, and was expected to take a distinguished degree, but getting into a scrape, only avoided expulsion by taking his name off the books, and exchanging an academical career for a commission in the Guards. Then followed a bout of horse-racing, when, after very nearly winning the Derby twice, and losing heavily much oftener, he retired from the turf, and his father paid his debts. This episode created an estrangement between the two; for Mr. Strickland, like many men with a large rent-roll, was probably not overburdened with ready money, and the sum to be paid was large. A year or two later the military papers were full of a mysterious rumour about an alleged *fracas* in a certain distinguished regiment, and the matter even reached the point of notoriety of being discussed with more or less accuracy in the clubs. Some people said that there was a lady in the case; others that the

colonel had been insulted by a gross caricature ; all agreed that the matter must come to a court-martial ; but it was finally settled without being made public, after the offender had sent in and been allowed to recall his papers for purchase. But a black mark was placed against Captain Strickland's name in the Military Secretary's books ; and when an old friend of his father, who was appointed to a high military command abroad, wanted to take him out on his personal staff, the Horse Guards refused to sanction the nomination. Shortly after this occurred the row down in Yewcestershire, the effect of which was no doubt seriously to diminish the popularity of the family in that county, and to extinguish all chance of the younger Strickland finding a Parliamentary opening there.

Such were, so far as I knew them, the antecedents of our friend, who, when I first made his acquaintance, was a man of a little over thirty, but who looked older. Of about middle height, with dark hair and eyes, a face smooth shaven save for a pointed black moustache, regular well-cut features, a clever mouth, and a general look of determination which his antecedents so far belied, Tom Strickland was a very noticeable man anywhere. A good rider, who did not care much for hunting ; almost as skilful with the pencil as a second-rate artist ; with a touch on the pianoforte that a professional might have envied ; fond of society, and yet always appearing to be bored by it ; with no apparent hobbies to spend money on, and yet seemingly always at the wrong end of a liberal allowance,—Tom Strickland gave one the impression of a man of ability, which he had never turned to any useful purpose, and who, without any stigma of dishonour, had yet the faculty of getting into scrapes.

Such was the man who now became my private secretary. For asking Mr. Strickland whether he thought his son would care about undertaking the duty, he said, "I have no doubt of it. I mentioned to him last night casually, when we were discussing your appointment, that I wished you would take him as your private secretary, and he replied he should like nothing better. Of course I did not tell him that I should take the liberty of proposing the thing to you. In fact, the idea did not occur to myself till afterwards."

After this there was nothing to be done but to offer the appointment to Tom Strickland. I liked the man himself, whose manners, indeed, possessed a peculiar fascination, in that, while possessing great powers of sarcasm, he reserved them for the public, never saying an ill-natured thing about one friend to another, and being always good - tempered and obliging at home. We were, moreover, under obligations to the family, especially to Mrs. Strickland, who, I suspected, had probably more to do with suggesting the arrangement than her husband. But I confess to feeling a little afraid of him in his new capacity. "You know," I said, when he came down to the office, in reply to a summons, "I am a little anxious lest this arrangement may prove a failure. I shall not ask you to write private notes, and so forth ; little Roundhand will do all that sort of thing ; but still there will be plenty of hard work and drudgery. There is no doubt as to your talents, of course. In fact, I believe you are much cleverer than I am, if the thing be told ; but I am afraid, to be quite plain, that you are too much of a swell for the post. I should be really sorry if your taking it led to our becoming less good friends than we are at present."

Tom Strickland, however, was very confident about his success, and eager to undertake any amount of work. The fact was, he said, it was time to turn over a new leaf. The men in the brigade thought he could do nothing, and his father looked on him as a regular *vaurien*; and, in truth, he had so far led a useless, troublesome life. But he was heartily sick of it now, and wanted to show that he was really fit for something.

"Well, but," I observed, playing my last card, "there is still one objection to be mentioned. It seems ungracious to suggest nothing but obstacles, but it is better to make them beforehand. You might get your promotion any day, and then how would you like to be serving as a lieutenant-colonel under a plain captain?"

"Why anticipate difficulties? I don't expect to get my promotion before the Government goes out. Besides, you will not stay in the army for ever."

"Why not?"

"I should have thought the difficulty would have occurred to you before. I don't want to flatter you, but a man who can speak as you can, and who has got such a start in life, cannot expect to remain always an under-secretary. But you will find your captain's commission a great obstacle to rising higher. Retire from the army, and you may be anything you like. The difficulty as regards myself and my rank would then altogether disappear. It wouldn't matter being a field-marshal if you were plain Mr. West."

Thus was the matter settled. The Office generally seemed a little inclined to resent the appointment as an invasion of its rights, and the Treasury objected at first on the score of expense; but this little difficulty was surmounted, and a day or so afterwards Strickland came to dine at the little house by Queen's Gate, in view to our setting to work afterwards to draw up a grand memorandum of the different measures to be brought forward.

CHAPTER XLVL.—ON DETAILS, PRIVATE AND PUBLIC.

"If I had known that dinner was to be exceptionally late, Eva, I would have proposed that Captain Strickland and I should go into business first, and dine afterwards; but I thought if we allowed half an hour's margin, there would be a reasonable chance of getting something to eat at the end of it; but one can't set to work fasting."

This observation was made as we sat with our guest before the drawing-room fire waiting for dinner.

"I am sorry I cannot sympathise with my respected host," said Strickland; "but I had luncheon rather late at the Wanderers, and am not particularly hungry. But I ought not to be so selfish, when

I see Mrs. West evidently suffering from the pangs of hunger."

"No, indeed," observed Eva; "I never feel hungry in London, but my husband is, because he speaks so crossly. He always gets cross when dinner is late."

"Then I am afraid you make me out to be in a state of permanent ill-temper, for it is not within my recollection that dinner or anything else in this house has ever been in time."

"How can you say such things, Charlie! I am sure I do my best, but you are so dreadfully particular. If everything is not ready to a minute, Captain Strickland, he makes such a fuss about it."

"Then, my love, as I observed

before, I must spend my life in making a fuss, for certainly nothing ever is ready to a minute in this house. If we said ready to an hour, it would be nearer to the mark."

"Well, I am sure you are unpunctual enough yourself sometimes. How often have we kept dinner waiting for ever so long while you were staying away at that horrid House of Commons? It is no wonder the servants are unpunctual."

"My dear, allow me to observe that the House of Commons has not been sitting since August, between which time and this present January it might have been possible to get over the demoralising effects of my unpunctuality; and considering that we have changed our servants about half a dozen times since then, I do not see how my bad example can be responsible for the present state of things."

"Not half-a-dozen times; how can you exaggerate so! We have only had four cooks altogether since we came to town. There was Smithers, who robbed us so; and then Jobbins, who was so violent with the manservant; and then that poor woman who was fetched away by the police, and——"

"My dear, you need not be at the trouble of going into the statistics of our domestic miseries; to recapitulate our domestic changes would involve something like the Homeric catalogue of ships: the fact remains that dinner was supposed to be ordered for half-past seven, and that it is now ten minutes after eight, and Captain Strickland and I have a long evening's work to get through afterwards."

"If I might venture to move an amendment," said our guest, "I would propose that Mrs. West favour us with a little music. I always, for my part, prefer music before dinner, and I suppose we shall be too busy to get any afterwards."

Eva said that she would sing something with pleasure, and went to the piano, but she got up with a show of petulance, and merely ran over the keys for a time, evidently too much out of temper to play with composure. Strickland stood near the piano, turning over the music-books that lay on a side-table, while I remained moodily at the other end of the room, annoyed that a bickering should have arisen on such a trifle as the dinner-hour; still more, that a visitor should have witnessed it, and that it should have been left to his superior tact to turn it aside. A foolish vanity perhaps took offence at the proposal, the ceremony of his entry on secretariat duty being hardly of a kind to be suitably opened by customary performance of music; but worse than all, my heart grew bitter as I thought what a change had come over our life, and our feeling towards each other. It had come to this already, and we had been married less than two years! But a few short months ago, and the very semblance of reproach would have brought Eva to me, suppliant and in tears. Now blame was met with petulance, and we seemed to be already on the brink of mutual disparagement and distrust.

Eventually dinner was announced, and manners under its influence gradually assumed their usual tone, without any further explanations or apologies—as was, alas! too often, now the case. Dinner ended, my new private secretary and I repaired to the back-room, and set about writing down the heads of the different proposals to be brought before the Government. Strickland wrote at the table while I walked up and down, or stood before the fire.

The following was the substance of the memorandum as finally read over by Strickland:—

"Note of proposed modifications in our military system. [Better call

them modifications, I said when dictating, and not reforms; old Stowe will not be so much frightened.]

"These naturally divide into two main heads, our military administration, and the organisation of the army, which may be kept separate.

"Military Administration.

"All the proposals made under this head have in view a process of decentralisation, involving a large delegation of authority to officials of all classes, with a distinct definition of their respective powers and responsibilities.

"This proposal includes, amongst other things, Decentralisation of Army Finance, a first step towards which is the

Reconstruction of the Form of Army Estimates,

so as to show expenditure locally, and by the different disbursers concerned, instead of bringing all the expenditure under the various heads of service into lump sums. Perhaps my meaning may be best illustrated by two examples.

"There are two branches of the estimates which are already decentralised—the pay of the troops and the outlay on works. A regimental paymaster has no difficulty in paying a regiment, because there are specific tables setting forth what each man may claim, and also a definite sanctioned establishment for each regiment. So also you see put down,—cost of fortifications at Malta, £50,000; cost of barracks at Montreal, £60,000; and so on. Thus the local officers at Malta and Montreal know exactly what their responsibilities are in the spending line. But, observe, the estimates are in this respect quite exceptional; if they had been prepared for these items according to the pattern observed in respect of other services, we should have had

such heads as these: 'Pay of the Captains in the Army;' 'ditto of the Corporals;' 'Purchase of Bricks throughout the British Empire;' 'Purchase of Lime throughout ditto;' 'Purchase of Nails throughout ditto;' and so forth; and every executive officer would be utterly in the dark as to what his liabilities and powers might be, while somebody in our office would be totalling up all the separate purchases made for these different articles, in order to see that the aggregate outlay on bricks and lime and nails all over the world did not exceed the votes. And this tomfoolery, forsooth, would be called financial supervision, or maintaining the recognised principle of civil control over army expenditure.

"I am not exaggerating in the least. This is precisely the way in which the estimates are now prepared in regard to all other branches of military expenditure; and the first step towards decentralisation and common sense is to distribute all charges locally, and by services. Thus, for example, the different votes for fuel, lodging-money, and so forth, should be split up, so that the actual allowances as well as pay of each person in the Control and other staff departments may be distinctly ascertained. The estimates seem to be framed now on purpose to hide these points. The expenditure could then be compared with the votes as it takes place, without need to refer everything to a central office.

"The same remarks have special application to the estimates and accounts of the manufacturing departments. What should we think of a railway company whose accounts showed what was spent on iron and wood, but did not bring out the cost of making a locomotive, or a passenger carriage, or any other information whatever to show whe-

ther their stock was cheap or dear? or of a mechanical engineer who kept an account of labour and materials, but could not do more than guess at the cost of any of his tools, and of the work they turned out? And yet this is the mode in which the most important part of our military expenditure is accounted for. Turn to the estimates, and you find, 'Wages of Clothing Department,' 'Time and Piece-work,' 'Materials to be purchased,' 'Wages of Manufacturing Department,' 'Timber,' 'Fuel,' 'Metals,' 'Saltpetre,' and so forth. Yet who on earth is the wiser for this information? Under a great pretence of detail, there is in fact the most complete vagueness.

"The estimates, indeed, in their present form, seem purposely devised to minister to that besetting passion for centralisation which animates our military system. For the result of bringing all the purchases for timber, and fuel, and saltpetre, and so forth, together under one vote, is that while the local manufacturing officers are kept in the dark as to the correspondence between the votes and expenditure—because the same officer who buys the raw material does not as a rule work it up—the key to the mystery is kept by the central office in Pall Mall; and so accounts and vouchers by the cartload have to be shot in there in order that the outlay may be recorded against these general votes.

"Of course these War Office accounts are not the only accounts kept of the manufacturing operations. If they were, the finance of our manufacturing departments would be in chaotic confusion. Supplementary additional accounts, I understand, are kept at the different establishments, which do really show the results of the work done, and the cost of the various articles turned out—accounts kept, in fact,

on proper commercial principles. What has now to be done is to drop the estimates and accounts altogether which are now published, substituting these latter ones.

"Further, the audit of the expenditure should be conducted entirely on the spot, not a single voucher being sent forward. This would put a stop to an enormous waste of clerical labour. Just think what would be involved if the London and North-Western Railway were to keep the accounts of their Crewe workshops at Euston instead of at Crewe. This is what we attempt now with our great establishments at Woolwich. My plan, I admit, will leave a lot of our clerks with nothing to do; but if the matter is once understood, the case for reform must be admitted.

"A similar process of decentralisation to be applied to the army accounts in all departments, and these accounts to be always audited so far as possible on the spot, either by district auditors, or auditors sent down on deputation from time to time. The copying of accounts and sending about of vouchers to be, in fact, everywhere suppressed."

"Excuse my interrupting you," observed Strickland, looking up from his writing, "but is there not an operation known as the appropriation audit? something done independently of the War Department? and might not this interfere with your scheme for decentralising?"

"The authority of Parliament would be needed to carry out the change, no doubt. But Parliament desires military efficiency as much as other people, and would cordially approve of the change, it may be hoped, when the object of it was understood. If we are always to work on the assumption that no one is ever under any circumstances to be trusted in anything, then of course you must go

on piling checks upon checks. But the object which ought to be kept in view is surely to establish a system in peace-time which may be expanded to suit a state of war. This you may do by training your financial officers to exercise independent responsibility, and then if a force takes the field you will have a body of trained officials fit to send with it, and to exercise a reasonable degree of financial control without losing their heads when left to run alone; and we shall avoid the chaotic scramble and confusion which now invariably attend the passage from our present rigid over-centralised procedure in peace to a state of war when checks and rules of all kinds are thrown aside just when the expenditure stands most in need of them.

"Observe, too, that the assumption which underlies our present system, that no one shall exercise any responsibility but the Secretary of State and the Comptroller-General of the Exchequer, involves, from the nature of the case, a sham, unless we also assume that they can virtually delegate their powers to subordinates. Well, nothing more is assumed in the present case, except that the delegation shall be given to persons trained in a good instead of a bad way.

"Now to the next great measure—

Decomposition of the War Department.

"The War Office as now constructed to be broken up, each of the different sub-departments being constituted as a separate office:—viz.

Commissariat.
Stores.
Manufactures.
Clothing.
Works.
Pay and Audit.
Discipline."

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"But," objected Strickland again, "is it not alleged that the object of consolidating these departments in one office and under one roof is to reduce correspondence and circumlocution? That objection will certainly be raised to your scheme, at any rate."

"Let them remain under the same roof by all means, if it is convenient, provided the separation is otherwise distinct and complete. Of course there will arise a nominal increase of correspondences from the change, because formal letters would be substituted for the informal ones styled minute papers now employed; but I believe there would be an immediate reduction in reality, because if men had to do it formally instead of informally, they would soon become ashamed of bandying foolish references to and fro in the way that now goes on. But that is not my point. The change is imperatively called for, for much weightier reasons. It is fatal to efficiency that all these heads of men, who should be responsible heads of executive departments, should have no distinct responsibility whatever, but do all their business down to the most trifling reference in the name of the Secretary of State. They are not even recognised to the extent of being addressed by name by the executive officials who write to them. All letters to our office are addressed to the Under-Secretary, and all letters go out in the name of the Secretary of State. In fact, these heads of departments, notwithstanding their high-sounding titles, are virtually nothing but clerks. Let this fact be once thoroughly apprehended, and the necessity for reform will be admitted. Besides, what training can be worse for men who may be called on any day to run alone on active service, than that they should be allowed to shelter themselves from all responsi-

bility for everything they do behind a bigger man?

"This evil, moreover, begets another. By employing men in this way as the irresponsible mouth-pieces of the minister, you encourage the tendency always sufficiently pronounced except in the firmest minds, to overdue *interference with others*. This, in fact, is the root of the over-centralisation which is the curse of our system. The executive officials all over the world who suffer from it cannot complain now, because it is all carried on in the name of the Secretary of State; but let the departmental chiefs, the Commissary-General, the Inspector-General of Fortifications, and so forth, be put at the heads of their own offices, and carry on business in their own names and on their own responsibility, and then they will be ashamed to practise this over-interference. At any rate, it will be at once seen where the blame lies.

"When this great reform shall have been carried out, the business of the Minister will then be limited to looking after the executive departments; to seeing that they do their work properly, instead of doing their work for them. That is the point to aim at. The functions of the War Minister, no expert, but a parliamentary officer, and liable to be constantly changed, should be ministerial, not executive.

"The authority of all officers, heads of departments as well as

executive agents, have to be clearly defined. In fact, you want a distinct code of regulations for all army business, including audit and account. You will never get it till the War-Office is reconstructed. For at present half our work seems to consist in discovering constructions and framing precedents for cases which ought never to come before us at all."

"You have said nothing about the Control Department in your memorial of grievances," remarked Strickland, after he had written all this down. "What do you propose to do as to that little matter?"

"Abolition, of course, of the concern in its present form, thereby having, I presume, all sensible men on our side."

"Well, before we proceed to draw down the wrath of the gods on our devoted heads, might I suggest that if we went upstairs, perhaps Mrs. West would give us some tea."

Eva, however, had gone off to bed, and the tea on the side-table was quite cold.

"I am afraid Mrs. West will hardly appreciate army reform, whether administrative or otherwise, if it involves long evenings passed in melancholy solitude. However, I had better take myself off too. I suppose we resume work to-morrow morning? At what time shall I come?"

"Suppose we say eleven?"

"Very well. Good-night."

MIDDLEMARCH.

It is difficult to say how far the large circle of readers who hailed with keen delight the announcement of a new novel by "George Eliot," will be satisfied with that writer for having adopted the tantalising expedient of issuing this last by instalments — a single "book" at a time. Certainly the tales which have already proceeded from this hand owe their deserved popularity by no means exclusively to the interest of the narrative, or to that eager curiosity which may sometimes be roused by the skilful handling of a mystery. Far less do they depend for their attraction upon anything that can be understood by the term "sensational." Such books are not like the "foaming grape of eastern France," whose chief zest is lost unless we take the full draught at once, and which becomes stale and unprofitable if set aside by any interruption; they are like the still old wine, of rare vintage, whose flavour we love to dwell upon and to recur to, and which we have no desire to toss off out of hand. If any work of fiction can bear the being read in portions without injury to its effect, it is one which, like the present, is really not so much a novel as a narrative which is made the vehicle of careful studies of character, fine and discriminating satire, and original thought clothed in the most finished and epigrammatic language. Regarded in this point of view, each "book" of 'Middlemarch' is complete in itself. But thorough justice will not have been done to the work until it has been read through a second time as a whole — an experiment which very few will grudge to make.

Dorothea Brooke, the heroine of this Middlemarch history, is as unlike an ordinary modern young lady as well can be. She would have felt, perhaps, that in saying this we were paying her almost the only compliment which she would have valued. To be complimented, or even to be made love to, after the fashion which most of her sex permit, and even seem to expect, would have been in her eyes somewhat of a degradation. Here is her description:

"Miss Brooke had that kind of beauty which seems to be thrown into relief by poor dress. Her hand and wrist were so finely formed that she could wear sleeves not less bare of style than those in which the Blessed Virgin appeared to Italian painters; and her profile as well as her stature and bearing seemed to gain the more dignity from her plain garments, which by the side of provincial fashion gave her the impressiveness of a fine quotation from the Bible,—or from one of our elder poets,—in a paragraph of to-day's newspaper. She was usually spoken of as being remarkably clever, but with the addition that her sister Celia had more common-sense. Nevertheless, Celia wore scarcely more trimmings; and it was only to close observers that her dress differed from her sister's, and had a shade of coquetry in its arrangements; for Miss Brooke's plain dressing was due to mixed conditions, in most of which her sister shared. The pride of being ladies had something to do with it: the Brooke connections, though not exactly aristocratic, were unquestionably 'good.' If you inquired backward for a generation or two, you would not find any yard-measuring or parcel-tying forefathers — anything lower than an admiral or a clergyman; and there was even an ancestor discernible as a Puritan gentleman who served under Cromwell, but afterwards conformed, and managed to come out of all political troubles as the proprietor of a respectable family estate. Young

women of such birth, living in a quiet country-house, and attending a village church hardly larger than a parlour, naturally regarded frippery as the ambition of a huckster's daughter.

Dorothea knew many passages of Pascal's *Pensées* and of Jeremy Taylor by heart; and to her the destinies of mankind, seen by the light of Christianity, made the solitudes of feminine fashion appear an occupation for Bedlam. She could not reconcile the anxieties of a spiritual life involving eternal consequences, with a keen interest in guimp and artificial protrusions of drapery. Her mind was theoretic, and yearned by its nature after some lofty conception of the world which might frankly include the parish of Tipton and her own rule of conduct there; she was enamoured of intensity and greatness, and rash in embracing whatever seemed to her to have those aspects; likely to seek martyrdom, to make retractions, and then to incur martyrdom after all in a quarter where she had not sought it."

Her pet occupation (or her "favourite *fad*," as her sister irreverently calls it) is drawing plans of model cottages for the poor; she disciplines herself by occasional fasts, has scruples about wearing even her mother's family jewels, and though very fond of riding, is not free from conscientious qualms on that subject. "She felt that she enjoyed it in a pagan sensuous sort of way, and always looked forward to renouncing it." In short, she is one of those possible Saint Theresas who, through "the meanness of opportunity," never come to the front.

Celia, the younger, looks upon her sister's peculiarities with a good deal of awe, mixed with suppressed impatience. She has the feeling, sometimes, that Dorothea is "too religious for family comfort." To her practical eyes—

"Notions and scruples were like split needles, making one afraid of treading, or sitting down, or even eating."

Mr. Brooke, the bachelor uncle with whom the two sisters reside,

is the Squire of Tipton Grange in Loamshire, keeping up country hospitality on an income of some three thousand a-year; "a man of nearly sixty, of acquiescent temper, miscellaneous opinions, and uncertain vote." His conversation—which is of the same miscellaneous character as his opinions—is the sort of talk to which we have all listened in a country house, the master of which has travelled a little, and read a little, and dabbled a little in accomplishments in his younger days. Mr. Brooke's mind is a perfect museum of ideas, or what he takes for such; just as his library drawers are stuffed with what he calls "documents"—miscellaneous papers which he has collected on all sorts of subjects; and the "scrappy slovenliness," as his author calls it, with which he jerks out his disjointed talk is highly comical. He indulges a good-humoured illusion that he is a kind of undeveloped universal genius, a Crichton *in posse*, who could have beaten his listeners at their own favourite weapons if he had cared to take the pains. "I was too indolent, you know"—he explains, on one occasion—"else I might have been anywhere at one time." Indeed, his natural zeal for knowledge would have "carried him over the hedge," as he observes, "but I saw it wouldn't do—I pulled up; I pulled up in time." This complacent appreciation of his own lapsed possibilities is of the most inoffensive sort, though it brings the Squire into some little trouble, inasmuch as it tempts him to take up the "independent" line in politics, and fall a prey to the radical wire-pullers in the borough of Middlemarch, who are as eager as any of their fellows to secure a gentleman of family and position to put in their front.

To such a man, his niece Dorothea is necessarily somewhat of a mystery. He looks upon her with much admiration, a little occasional

awe, and a little of that contempt which we all secretly feel for anything which we cannot understand. Her ways are, not as the ways of other young women. And when she declares it "impossible" for her to marry their neighbour, Sir James Chettam—"a blooming Englishman of the red-whiskered type"—whose estates adjoin the Tipton property, and who is really a very good tempered and amiable fellow besides being a baronet—though, as even Mr. Brooke is driven to confess, "he doesn't go much into ideas"—then his feeling of the inscrutable nature of the female problem is confirmed.

"Mr. Brooke wondered, and felt that women were an inexhaustible subject of study, since even he at his age was not in a perfect state of scientific prediction about them."

Poor Sir James Chettam has been an unacknowledged suitor of Dorothea's some time before the story opens. He has never as yet made open profession; and Dorothea has steadily in her own mind, though latterly with some degree of wilful blindness, referred all his visits to the Grange to the account of her younger sister, and treated him with a frank kindness as a possible brother-in-law. For Celia such a destiny, with its commonplace happiness, might be possible; but for herself—the idea, when it is flashed upon her consciousness at last by Celia's plain-speaking, is, as she says, "horrible."

"Dorothea, with all her eagerness to know the truths of life, retained very childlike ideas about marriage. She felt sure she would have accepted the judicious Hooker, if she had been born in time to save him from that wretched mistake he made in matrimony; or John Milton when his blindness had come on; or any of the other great men whose odd habits it would have been glorious plety to endure. But an amiable handsome baronet, who said "Exactly" even when she expressed

uncertainty—how could he affect her as a lover? The really delightful marriage must be that where your husband was a sort of father, and could teach you even Hebrew, if you wished it."

In fact, Miss Brooke has just at this time found—or thinks she has found—the ideal hero to whom she feels she can devote herself, who (to use the expression of her own thoughts) "could understand the higher inward life, and with whom there could be some spiritual communion." To her enthusiastic fancy, which has been dreaming of this nobler destiny of women, the coming cavalier wears upon his head (we are borrowing the illustration from the motto to the chapter) the resplendent helmet of Mambrino. Certainly, to the reader's eyes, he appears clad in much more ordinary fashion. He is the Rev. Edward Casaubon, rector and squire (for he lives in the manor-house) of the neighbouring parish of Lowick, a learned and retired scholar, who has for years been making voluminous collections for an important projected work—a 'Key to all Mythologies;' intended to show "that all the mythical systems or erratic mythical fragments in the world were corruptions of a tradition originally revealed;" to supersede, we suppose, that remarkable but almost forgotten book, Gale's 'Court of the Gentiles.' Mr. Casaubon dines for the first time at the Grange, and there makes complete conquest of poor Dorothea. Her admiration is not shared by Celia, who can see no Mambrino's helmet—only a very plain man of from forty-five to fifty, with blinking eyes, the effect of continual study, and other disagreeable peculiarities. Here is the conversation which takes place between the sisters after this first dinner:—

"When the two girls were in the drawing-room alone, Celia said—

"How very ugly Mr. Casaubon is!"

"Celia! He is one of the most

distinguished men I ever saw. He is remarkably like the portrait of Locke. He has the same deep eye-sockets.'

"'Had Locke those two white moles with hairs on them?'"

"'Oh, I daresay! when people of a certain sort looked at him,' said Dorothea, walking away a little.

"'Mr. Casaubon is so fallow.'

"'All the better. I suppose you admire a man with the complexion of a *cochon de lait*.' [This is a spiteful hit at poor Sir James—for Celia's benefit.]

"'Dodo!' exclaimed Celia, looking after her in surprise. 'I never heard you make such a comparison before.'

"'Why should I make it before the occasion came? It is a good comparison: the match is perfect.'

"'Miss Brooke was clearly forgetting herself, and Celia thought so.

"'I wonder you show temper, Dorothea.'

"'It is so painful in you, Celia, that you will look at human beings as if they were mere animals with a toilette, and never see the great soul in a man's face.'

"'Has Mr. Casaubon a great soul?' Celia was not without a touch of naive malice.

"'Yes, I believe he has,' said Dorothea, with the full voice of decision. 'Everything I see in him corresponds to his pamphlet on Biblical Cosmology.'

"'He talks very little,' said Celia.

"'There is no one for him to talk to.'"

But Celia's opinion of this hero of her sister's imagination is more plainly expressed during a subsequent conversation between the two. The Rector is coming to the Grange again to dinner; this time as the accepted lover of Dorothea, though the younger sister has not yet been made acquainted with that fact.

"'Is any one else coming to dinner besides Mr. Casaubon?'"

"'Not that I know of.'

"'I hope there is some one else. Then I shall not hear him eat his soup so.'

"'What is there remarkable about his soup-eating?'"

"'Really, Dodo, can't you hear how

he scrapes his spoon? And he always blinks before he speaks. I don't know whether Locke blinked, but I'm sure I'm sorry for those who sat opposite to him if he did.'

"'Celia,' said Dorothea, with emphatic gravity, 'pray don't make any more observations of that kind.'

"'Why not? They are quite true,' returned Celia, who had her reasons for persevering, though she was beginning to be a little afraid.

"'Many things are true which only the commonest minds observe.'

"'Then I think the commonest minds must be rather useful. I think it is a pity Mr. Casaubon's mother had not a commoner mind: she might have taught him better.'

It is the modern version, often repeated in the prosaic chronicles of life, of Titania and her love; only that in this case the hero of feminine admiration, whatever his social deficiencies, has not exactly an ass's head on his shoulders. He is only too learned, and too devoted to his literary investigations. But the die is cast. The beauty and brightness of Dorothea, her intelligence and enthusiasm,—and even still more, we must suppose, the marked interest with which she listens to his pedantic sententiousness,—have caught the fancy of the middle-aged student, and awoke in him a sensation which he supposes to be love. It is not only, or chiefly, that he has been "using up his eyesight too much of late upon old manuscripts, and wants a reader for his evenings," and is, in this matter, "fastidious in voices," as he has told Mr. Brooke; though this consideration has clearly had a large share in directing his thoughts towards the acquisition of a wife. Still, his feelings are genuine, so far as they go. The long letter in which he conveys his proposal is redeemed from much of its egotism and assumption of superiority by one or two touches which show that such heart as he has is really concerned in the matter, and by the

confession that "in this order of experience he is still young."

Dorothea accepts him, — thankfully, almost rapturously; with an amount of tearful gratitude which, if young ladies in her position often feel, they at least do not let either their lovers or their biographers into the secret. "She fell on her knees, buried her face, and sobbed." Here was her ideal destiny realised.

"How could it occur to her to examine the letter, to look at it critically as a profession of love? Her whole soul was possessed by the fact that a fuller life was opening before her; she was a neophyte about to enter on a higher grade of initiation. She was going to have room for the energies which stirred uneasily under the dimness and pressure of her own ignorance and the petty peremptoriness of the world's habits."

If Miss Brooke's feelings are very unlike those which ordinary young women would be conscious of on the eve of matrimony, so is the Rev. Edward Casaubon, in his views on that important step, very unlike a regulation lover. He does not hesitate, in his very original love-letter, to explain that he looks upon Dorothea as a companion who is "to supply aid in graver labours, and to cast a charm over vacant hours." So, again, in one of their first conversations after their engagement, he says to her: "The great charm of your sex is its capability of an ardent self-sacrificing affection; and herein we see its fitness to round and complete the existence of our own." It is not improbable that middle-aged gentlemen, when they choose a wife of deliberate purpose rather than from what is called falling in love, are often very consciously and principally influenced by such considerations, and that they are frequently much more truly "in love" with themselves than with the lady. But they must feel that it would scarcely help their

suit, and might rather startle her self-appreciation to be told that, instead of a necessity to the suitor's happiness, she is only to be taken up as the amusement of a "vacant hour."

No wonder that such a lover looks forward eagerly to "the happy termination of his courtship," because, among other reasons, it is "a hindrance to the progress of his great work."

"But he had deliberately incurred the hindrance, having made up his mind that it was now time for him to adorn his life with the graces of female companionship, to irradiate the gloom which fatigue was apt to hang over the intervals of studious labour with the play of female fancy, and to secure in this, his culminating age, the solace of female tendance for his declining years. Hence he determined to abandon himself to the stream of feeling, and perhaps was surprised to find what an exceedingly shallow rill it was. As in droughty regions baptism by immersion could only be performed symbolically, so Mr. Casaubon found that sprinkling was the utmost approach to a plunge which his stream would afford him; and he concluded that the poets had much exaggerated the force of masculine passion."

But Dorothea sees no shortcomings. She supplies all that is wanting out of the wealth of her own imagination.

"She filled up all blanks with unmanifested perfections, interpreting him as she interpreted the works of Providence, and accounting for seeming discords by her own deafness to the higher harmonies. And there are many blanks left in the weeks of courtship which a loving faith fills with happy assurance."

She is content, therefore, with the most imperfect utterances of the idol which she has set up. She even smothers her natural disappointment when, in response to her enthusiasm about model cottages, he "diverts the talk to the extremely narrow accommodation which was

to be had in the dwellings of the ancient Egyptians." The author sums up this form of hero-worship, which meets us in so many shapes, in one of those terse and frequent sentences with which these volumes, like their predecessors, abound.

"What believer sees a disturbing omission or infelicity? The text, whether of prophet or poet, expands for whatever we can put into it, and even his bad grammar is sublime."

Once, indeed, the veil is half-lifted from her eyes, and a casual remark from her future husband, which he lets fall in the most complete unconsciousness of all that it reveals, jars painfully upon her woman's feeling. It has been settled, that they are to go as far as Rome on their wedding journey. Mr. Casaubon has some literary researches to make in the Vatican. Celia has declined to accompany them, nor does Dorothea herself desire it; her visions of future happiness and usefulness are fully self-sufficient for her. But Mr. Casaubon is disappointed—on her account, of course.

"You will have many lonely hours, Dorothea, for I shall be constrained to make the utmost use of my time during our stay in Rome, and I shall feel more at liberty if you had a companion."

"The words 'I should feel more at liberty' grated on Dorothea. For the first time in speaking to Mr. Casaubon she colored from annoyance.

"You must have misunderstood me very much," she said, "if you think I should not enter into the value of your time; if you think that I should not willingly give up whatever interfered with your using it to the best purpose."

But when she goes up to dress for dinner, she reproaches herself for the irritation she has felt, and for the tone in which she had answered him.

"Surely I am in a strangely selfish weak state of mind," she said to herself. "How can I have a husband who is so much above me without knowing that

he needs me much less than I need him?"

So they are married; to the discomfort of poor Sir James Chetam, who bears his defeat, however, with very sensible philosophy; to the dismay of good Mr. Brooke, who has to fall back for support upon his convictions of the general incomprehensibility of woman; to the great disgust of Celia, who is more than ever confirmed in her antipathy to "notions," and is likely to have an uncomfortable recollection, for some time after the wedding, of the very free strictures which she has passed upon the bridegroom; and to the entire disapproval of a certain Mrs. Cadwallader, wife of another rector in the neighbourhood, who has great confidence in her capacity for regulating the affairs of her neighbours generally, and especially in the matter of match-making.

The marriage turns out not more happily than might be expected. Not that it leads to any domestic catastrophe; the hand from which 'Middlemarch' comes does not require to work that kind of popular material up into the story. But Casaubon is unlovable; unlovable by any possibility of woman's manifold nature, as poor Dorothea presently discovers. Unlovable because he has no capacity in himself for loving anything except his projected book, and finds his young wife, except as a reader and amanuensis, a positive embarrassment. Yet none the less will the thoughtful reader regard him, in spite of his narrow selfishness and hardness, with great pity. For upon him, no less than upon Dorothea, the truth is breaking by slow degrees, that the great idea of his life is a hopeless failure. The secret gnawing mistrust of his own powers, which creeps over him like a slow paralysis; the suspicion that the row of close-filled note-books, the

darling interest and occupation of a life, will never in his hands take connected shape, that he has mistaken the diligence of a collector for the genius of an author, and that even if his ability were equal to the task, still the literary world has been going on while he has been lingering—that his researches have been anticipated by more modern scholars, and that in all his elaborate disquisitions he is but fighting in argument against the ghosts of long-exploded errors—all this is as bitter a mortification to the student as the disenchantment of her illusions is to the young wife. Selfish pedant though he be, we cannot help but pity him; especially when he sees, or thinks he sees, that this keen-eyed young enthusiast, whom he has married to be a help-mate in a very unusual sense, is becoming a silent critic of his incapacity. He suddenly begins to look upon her as “a personification of that shallow world which surrounds the ill-appreciated and desponding author.” There has come upon the scene too, in order further to trouble his literary peace, a young cousin whom he has half-adopted, and to whom he has offered to give a start in life in any career to which his choice may lead him. But to Will Ladislaw, mercurial in temperament and indolent in practice, choice of a career is the most difficult thing in the world. An amateur painter, he has been hanging about the studios in Rome during the Casaubons’ visit there, and, by virtue of his relationship, has established an intimacy with Dorothea of quite an innocent kind, but of which Mr. Casaubon is in a certain sense and half-unconsciously jealous. The young man is not fond of his elderly cousin, in spite—or possibly because—of his pecuniary obligations to him, and to him it seems “too intolerable that Dorothea should be worshipping this husband,” who is far from a

divinity in his eyes. He lets fall some words about English scholarship being behind the rest of the world, and Mr. Casaubon’s misfortune in not reading German.

“Young Mr. Ladislaw was not at all deep himself in German writers; but very little achievement is required in order to pity another man’s shortcomings.”

Dorothea loyally defends her husband, and Ladislaw is piqued into still more disrespectful utterances. He talks about students who only “crawl a little way after men of the last century, and correct their mistakes—living in a lumber-room, and furbishing up broken-legged theories about Chus and Misraim.”

“How can you speak so lightly?” said Dorothea, with a look between sorrow and anger. “If it were as you say, what could be sadder than so much ardent labour all in vain? Indeed, I am wrong altogether. Failure after long perseverance is much grander than never to have a striving good enough to be called a failure.”

But the arrow thus launched remains fixed in the wound. Still, Dorothea’s nature is too noble for it to have any effect upon her loyalty to her husband. Her eyes become opened painfully, not only to her own illusion, but to her husband’s also. “She felt the waking of a presentiment that there might be a sad consciousness in his life which made as great a need on his side as on her own.”

The closing scenes of Casaubon’s life, made more anxious and hopeless by the presence of the fatal disease which, as both he and his young wife know each in their secret hearts, may cut it short at any moment, are described in masterly fashion. Few authors could have succeeded in making us understand the selfish egoism of the antiquated scholar, and the high-souled sacrifice which the wife still makes to duty after her brighter dream has for ever

disappeared, without rousing our indignation against the cold and unsympathising husband. But it is done; and the hardness in which he locks himself up against all attempts at sympathy on Dorothea's part only increases the pathos of his lonely despondency. The barrier which disparity of every kind has thrown up between the two, is described with a wonderful power of thoughtful analysis, and in language which demands in return no little thought from the reader, so pregnant with meaning is every phrase.

"She nursed him, she read to him, she anticipated his wants, and was solicitous about his feelings; but there had entered into the husband's mind the certainty that she judged him, and that her wifely devotedness was like a penitential expiation of unbelieving thoughts—was accompanied with a power of comparison by which himself and his doings were seen too luminously as a part of things in general. His discontent passed vapour-like through all her gentle loving manifestations, and clung to that inappreciative world which she had only brought nearer to him.

"Poor Mr. Casaubon! This suffering was the harder to bear because it seemed like a betrayal: the young creature who had worshipped him with perfect trust had quickly turned into the critical wife; and early instances of criticism and resentment had made an impression which no tenderness and submission afterwards could remove. To his suspicious interpretation Dorothea's silence now was a suppressed rebellion; a remark from her which he had not in any way anticipated was an assertion of conscious superiority; her gentle answers had an irritating cautiousness in them; and when she acquiesced it was a self-approved effort of forbearance. The tenacity with which he strove to hide this inward drama made it the more vivid for him; as we hear with the more keenness what we wish others not to hear."

tion breathing hardly under the pressure of self-distrust; the goal receding and the heavier limbs; and now at last the sword trembling visibly above him."

We have lingered over a portion of the book which develops most remarkably the writer's powers, and we prefer to leave the future of Dorothea Casaubon to be sought out by our readers in the volumes themselves. Her discarded tutor, Sir James Chettam, who is by no means the kind of person to break his heart for any woman, consoles himself in very brief space by transferring his affections to the younger sister, Celia. And that placid and prosaic young lady is much too rational to allow his passing preference for Dorothea to stand in the way of an arrangement which she feels will be more suitable for all parties. The baronet, indeed, like a true gentleman, maintains a chivalric loyalty to the lady who was none the less worthy of his love because she could not accept it. He always continues to think Dorothea "a noble woman," who "ought to have been a queen;" an opinion which Celia receives with much complacency. "It was very well," she thought, "for Sir James to say so, but *he* would not have been comfortable with Dodo,"—in which belief she was undoubtedly right.

The course of the story takes us very much into the borough-town of Middlemarch, and the provincial magnates who make up society there. And here, we need hardly say, the peculiar and inimitable force with which, avoiding anything like caricature, "George Eliot" brings before us the characteristics of English middle-class life is fully exemplified. It may be that those smoother and more refined circles in which everything is cut, more or less, to an artificial and uniform pattern, and where few things are more dreaded than the imputation of od-

We learn to see, with Dorothea's eyes, "the lonely labour, the ambi-

dity, present less attractive matter to an original artist ; since one modern drawing-room scene and conversation may be and is multiplied by fifty in our popular novels with but very slight modifications. But it is also clear that this writer has a special faculty of observation, and a special taste for the reproduction, of the salient features of country town and village life, with a quick perception both of the humour and the pathos with which it abounds. And when we get fairly into the town, and are admitted to the hospitable board of Mrs. Vincy, the mayor's wife (herself an innkeeper's daughter, though she has a son at Oxford affecting expensive society and spending his money therein, as innkeepers' grandsons are rather apt to do), or when we are set down at old invalid Mr. Featherstone's churlish fireside, we feel that we have got into a fresher atmosphere and more amusing company, even if not quite so select as Mr. Fred Vincy the Oxonian might desire. There are a dozen rapid dashes of character among these Middlemarch notabilities, whose sayings and doings occupy but a very few pages here and there in the volumes, but each with individuality enough thrown into them to set up an industrious writer with characters for three or four separate novels, if he carefully worked them out. Not that these people are what are sometimes called "characters" or "originals" at all ; they have no eccentricities of behaviour, and no recurrent phrases or turns of speech at which we are expected to laugh every time they appear on the scene.

Take, for instance, those brief sketches of Dr. Sprague and Dr. Minchin, the rival practitioners, who "concealed with much etiquette their contempt for each other's skill." There is nothing out of the way about these men—a dozen country towns might furnish the originals ;

the value of the drawing lies simply in the touch of the artist's hand.

"Dr. Sprague was more than suspected of having no religion ; but somehow Middlemarch tolerated this deficiency in him as if he had been a *Lord Chancellor* ; indeed, it is probable that his professional weight was the more believed in, the old-world association of cleverness with the evil principle being still potent in the minds of even lady-patients who had the strictest ideas of frilling and sentiment. . . . On this ground it was (professionally speaking) fortunate for Dr. Minchin that his religious sympathies were of a general kind, and such as gave a distant medical sanction to all serious sentiment whether of Church or Dissent, rather than any adhesion to particular tenets. . . . Dr. Minchin was soft-handed, pale-complexioned, and of rounded outline, not to be distinguished from a mild clergyman in appearance : whereas Dr. Sprague was superfluously tall ; his trousers got creased at the knees, and showed an excess of boot at a time when straps seemed necessary to any dignity of bearing ; you heard him go in and out, and up and down, as if he had come to see after the roofing. In short, he had weight, and might be expected to grapple with a disease and throw it ; while Dr. Minchin might be better able to detect it lurking and to circumvent it."

The curious thing about all these sketches is that they are people whom most of us have known under some other name, only we failed to catch the humorous aspect of their being. We thought them prosaic, not to say vulgar ; when, lo ! they were full of poetry,—to the poet. Mr. Standish, the old lawyer, "who had been so long concerned with the landed gentry, that he had become landed himself," and brought out his "by G—" "in a deep-mouthed manner, as a sort of armorial bearings, stamping the speech of a man who held a good position ;" Mr. Chichely, the middle-aged bachelor "who had a complexion somewhat like an Easter egg, a few hairs carefully arranged, and a carriage im-

plying the consciousness of a distinguished appearance ;" who thinks there should always be "a little devil in a woman"—"his study of the fair sex seeming to have been detrimental to his theology ;" who shakes his head meaningly when it is suggested to him to "make up" to Miss Vincy—implying that "he was not going to incur the certainty of being accepted by the woman he should choose ;" Mr. Bambridge the horse-dealer, "loud, robust, and sometimes spoken of as being 'given to indulgence'—chiefly in swearing, drinking, and beating his wife,"—"the minute retentiveness of whose memory was chiefly shown about the horses he had himself bought and sold, the number of miles they would trot you in no time without turning a hair, being, after the lapse of years, still a subject of passionate asseveration" (if Mr. Bambridge's rich fund of anecdote and illustration is not poetry, we have no poetry left) ; Mr. Horrock the "vet," cynical and silent, whose critical judgment, "if you could be ever fortunate enough to know it, would be *the* thing, and no other ;" Mr. Trumbull the auctioneer, with whom "things never began, but always commenced, both in private life and on his handbills," and who "would have liked to have had the universe under his hammer, feeling sure it would go at a higher figure for his recommendation ;"—why, we have all met the very men in the course of our wanderings up and down, and never till now saw anything worth special remark in them. They are like the little "bits" of scenery you pass on every turnpike road ; an artist comes that way, takes out his palette, dashes a few streaks of moist colour on his rough paper, and you have a result which even your inartistic eyes can appreciate, though you did not know before that the picturesque was there.

It is very noteworthy how many of the best novels of the present day touch with more or less distinctiveness upon questions of religious belief. We set aside, of course, those many stories—some excellent of their kind, others the veriest rubbish—which are confessedly stories with a purpose, written to advocate some favourite view, in which the illustration of certain theological tenets is of the very essence of the book. In these, if we only know the name of the writer—sometimes a fairly accurate guess may be arrived at by merely glancing at that of the publisher—the reader is enabled at once to forecast the kind of fare which is provided for him, and will proceed to read or not to read according as his bias may incline him. But even in those which assume no such didactic office, and whose writers would fairly repudiate any such design as proselytism, the great problems of religion, instead of being tacitly ignored or disguised in vague generalities, are assumed as having a momentous influence upon human life. They are not brought prominently into the foreground, perhaps, but they are evidently present to the mind of the writer as elements of grave importance. If our generation be indeed so irreverent and irreligious—as it is said to be, the traces of this character are not to be found in our highest works of fiction. If there is scepticism in them, it is scepticism in the better sense of the word. The doubts are those of the honest doubter ; the questioning is not of a sneering or captious kind, but has the earnest tone of the inquirer who seeks an answer. Even if prevalent forms of belief are sometimes held up somewhat rudely to the light and shown to be here and there but thread-bare spiritual raiment, it is without prejudice to the living body of truth which they are intended to clothe.

This is peculiarly the case with the works of the writer whose last production lies before us. Theological colour these volumes have none. Professions of a creed may seem to be even purposely avoided. But no one can say that their tone is other than reverent on religious questions. The unrealities of religion, whether they take the shape of formal act or fluent profession, are touched with a satire whose lash is not the less cutting because it is laid on with the most delicate wrist-play. People "whose celestial intimacies seem not to improve their domestic manners," who contrive "to conciliate piety and worldliness, the nothingness of this life and the desirability of cut glass, the consciousness at once of filthy rags and the best damask" find no mercy here. And whether the old miser Peter Featherstone seeks, as he declares in his will, "to please God Almighty" by building almshouses, or Mr. Bulstrode attempts "an act of restitution which may move Divine Providence to avert painful consequences," the touch of honest scorn in the brief phrases is more effective than a homily. And nowhere, read where we will, shall we find less religious narrowness, or a fuller confession of the spiritual needs of human nature. Indeed, the cry of the soul after something more satisfying than the mere husks of worldly well-doing and success seems uttered in these volumes with an intensity which is almost painful. True, we have no distinct ideal set up and recommended as really attainable; rather—and this gives to the work that remarkable tinge of melancholy which has been remarked, in spite of all their grace and humour, in most of its predecessors from the same hand—we are allowed to gather that for the most part ideals are unattainable, and that the highest aspirations only serve to give a grandeur to the failure in

which they inevitably end. We have been forcibly reminded, as we read, of the tone of thought which runs through several of those most remarkable sermons of Frederick Robertson—that all life is in one sense an illusion and a failure; and that the Highest Life on earth was, to outward seeming, a notorious failure. Take the characters in these volumes: all who set before them an object in life higher than their fellows, fail in its attainment. Casaubon is a failure, Dorothea is a failure, Lydgate is a failure more than all. It might seem, at first thought, as though the moral were as cynical as this—if you would escape disappointment, you must not seek to rise above the level of your fellow-creatures. It is Celia, with her kitten-like content and hatred of "notions,"—Sir James Chettam, who "doesn't go much into ideas,"—Will Ladislaw, with his amiable vagabond dilettantism, who looks upon all forms of prescribed work as 'harness,' and holds genius to be "necessarily intolerant of fetters,"—Fred Vincy, with his goodhumoured gentlemanlike selfishness,—who come out, on the whole, with the largest share of commonplace happiness. But we are much mistaken if such be the moral which the author—if any moral be intended or permissible—would have us draw. The lines may be read another way. To have an ideal at which we aim, and that ideal of the highest kind, is the worthy life and the true life, though not of necessity that which attains its object or wins content. It is better to fail than to succeed, if the aim has been noble in the one case, and mean in the other. Our full sympathies remain with the aspirants in their failures—even because of their failures—not with the lower natures in their placid ruminant life. We feel no shadow of regret for Dorothea's loss of her position as the lady of Lowick Manor, though

we cannot accept without some disappointment her descent from her pedestal to the level of ordinary humanity, to be only "known in a certain circle as a wife and mother;" and we agree sadly with Lydgate in regarding himself as a failure, when he gets into extensive practice, and the receipt of an excellent income, and is credited by all his acquaintances with the possession of a charming wife.

It is somewhat singular to find a writer whose line of thought is so distinctly modern, leaning with so much evident tolerance, if not with favour, towards that type of old English churchmanship which has become almost a byword of reproach among the more active and critical spirits of our own day. There is the same gentle dealing with the old-fashioned church parson which we found in 'Adam Bede,' and in 'The Mill on the Floss.' Mr. Farebrother, the by no means pattern vicar of St. Botolph's, but for whom nevertheless our sympathies are strongly enlisted, is cast in very much the same mould, allowing for these specific differences which an artist whose figures are never servilely repeated knows how to make, as the Mr. Irwine of 'Adam Bede.' Farebrother has more weakness, but more ability. The author of this remarkable series of novels has no sympathy with those who denounce what they have been pleased to term "the gentleman heresy"; meaning thereby that to be a gentleman is no part of the qualification for a clergyman's office, and may possibly be a hindrance to his work. We believe that, so far as English feeling is concerned, whether among rich or poor, no mistake could possibly be greater; and that, next to those more solemn essentials which fit a man for such a vocation, the delicate tact and high-mindedness of the true gentleman, are

qualities especially needed in the difficult relations into which the town or country parson is being continually brought with his people. For men who become clergymen merely "for gentility's sake," the author of 'Middlemarch' has very little indulgence,—dismissing one of them in the indignant words of honest Mary Garth, "What right have such men to represent Christianity? as if it were an institution for getting up idiots genteelly!" But to find any favour in these volumes they must be gentlemen in the best sense, whatever else they may be:—

"'I don't say that Farebrother is apostolic,' said Lydgate. 'His position is not quite like that of the apostles; he is only a parson among parishioners whose lives he has to try and make better. Practically, I find that what is called being apostolic now is an impatience of everything in which the parson does not cut the principal figure. I see something of that in Mr. Tyke at the hospital; a good deal of his doctrine is a sort of pinching hard to make people uncomfortably aware of him.'"

The appreciation shown by this writer for all that was good—and there was much—in the clergy of the old school, includes also a kindly though critical reminiscence of the external aspect which the Church and its services presented in their day. Here, as before, the churches into which we are carried are not the "restored" and beautiful buildings with which we are all now so familiar in fiction as well as in fact, but the "white-washed walls and dark old pews," and "little gallery over the vestry," in which the parish choir sing the good old tune of 'Hanover.' The date of the story—in the days of 'Mr. Peel'—will of course account in some degree for the style of the picture; but the touches are evidently all put in with a loving hand. If we are made to smile at the homeliness

the group, it is a smile of a very kindly sort, and there is no more sneer intended than was in Addison's mind when he showed us Sir Roger de Coverley allowing no one to go to sleep in church but himself. A certain provincial architectural society, in one of those "progresses" now so common in search of objects of interest, visited amongst other places a village church which had lately been in the hands of the architect. The president—a considerable antiquarian authority—got up into the pulpit, and began, as was usual, to deliver a kind of running lecture on the chief points of interest in the building. To the horror and disappointment of the zealous rector, who had spared neither money nor pains upon the work of renovation, he began his remarks as follows: "We have here before us, gentlemen, one of the most uninteresting objects to antiquarian eyes—a thoroughly restored church." One can quite conceive that to the author of 'Middlemarch,' though for a somewhat different reason, the hand of the modern restorer, who has doubtless by this time duly scraped off the whitewash, and cut down the dark old pews, and disestablished the singing gallery in Lowick church, will have seemed to have been guilty of almost as ruthless a sacrilege as the enemy who in older times broke down all the carved work with axes and hammers. Some of us retain cherished reminiscences, tender as well as picturesque, even of the unregenerate church architecture and church order of our childhood; and to destroy them is like rubbing off the precious rust from the collector's relic.

Something of the same feeling may also be traced, here as in the author's previous volumes, in that intense appreciation of midland county scenery—so prosaic in the estimation of strangers, so heartily

enjoyable to those who are most familiar with it—which shows itself in passages like the following:—

"The ride to Stone Court lay through a pretty bit of midland landscape, almost all meadows and pastures, with hedgerows still allowed to grow in bushy beauty and to spread out coral fruit for the birds. Little details gave each field a particular physiognomy, dear to the eyes that have looked on them from childhood; the pool in the corner where the grasses were dank and trees leaned whisperingly; the great oak shadowing a bare place in mid-pasture; the high bank where the ash-trees grew; the sudden slope of the old marl-pit making a red background for the burdock; the huddled roofs and ricks of the homestead without a traceable way of approach; the grey gate and fences against the depths of the bordering wood; and the stray hovel, its old, old thatch full of mossy hills and valleys with wondrous modulations of light and shadow such as we travel far to see in later life, and see larger, but not more beautiful. These are the things that make the gamut of joy in landscape to midland-bred souls—the things they toddled among, or perhaps learned by heart standing between their father's knees while he drove leisurely."

Perhaps the ablest analysis of character in this book is that of Bulstrode, the "evangelical" banker. To paint in glaring colours the sanctimonious hypocrite is easy enough for a very ordinary artist, and we have had him set before us under various names, from Mawworm downwards, until we have become almost as sick of the portraits as we should be of the original, if we met him in actual life—which, be it observed, we very rarely do. But Mr. Bulstrode is not of this coarse type. He is not, in the ordinary sense of the word, a hypocrite at all; he does not wear a mere outward mask of spirituality. So far as intense belief in an unseen world and a controlling Providence, and a real personal interest in what he conceives to be, as he phrases it,

"for God's glory," he is sincere enough. It is this which redeems him at his worst from our contempt and disgust, even while we shudder at what we feel to be his blasphemous paltering with conscience. The man *is* religious,—miserably and superstitiously so. He is a character much more natural, and probably much more common, than the Pharisee of ordinary fiction. To enter into the feelings of such natures must always be difficult for a commonly honest mind; but the dissection of such a man's inner conscience, which we have here made for us with the remarkable skill of this moral anatomist, has at least all the *vraisemblance* of an operation performed upon the actual human subject. That entire separation of religion, so called, from the human duties of life is seldom perhaps so complete as we have it here represented; men do not often confess it even to their secret selves; but there can be no doubt as to its being, for sordid minds, the most fascinating of all heresies. We should be very sorry to appear to cast even the shadow of an unfair reflection upon a class; but it would almost seem as if that special bias towards a theology more or less antinomian which is largely observable in the tradesman class—to a far greater extent than in any other class above or below, is not purely accidental, but that it is a preference arising distinctly out of the circumstances of their life. Finding such doctrines, or doctrines which appear the same, maintained by theologians of repute, and pushed to the extreme by modern teachers who have inherited their terminology without their spirituality, they have adopted them honestly as best meeting their own difficulties. Few will reason themselves directly into the state of mind which is here attributed to Mr. Dunkirk, the thieves' pawnbroker, who "had never conceived

that trade had anything to do with salvation;" but a good many men, who are by no means hypocrites in the grosser sense, act indirectly upon some such belief. — This description of the Middlemarch banker's state of mind is one which might serve perhaps as the unveiling of more than one nature in which the same contradiction is at work:—

"There may be coarse hypocrites, who consciously affect beliefs and emotions for the sake of gulling the world, but Bulstrode was not one of them. He was simply a man whose desires had been stronger than his theoretic beliefs, and who had gradually explained the gratification of his desires into satisfactory agreement with those beliefs. If this be hypocrisy, it is a process which shows itself occasionally in us all, to whatever confession we belong, and whether we believe in the future perfection of our race or in the nearest date fixed for the end of the world; whether we regard the earth as a putrefying nidus for a saved remnant, including ourselves, or have a passionate belief in the solidarity of mankind.

"The service he could do to the cause of religion had been through life the ground he alleged to himself for his choice of action: it had been the motive which he had poured out in his prayers. Who would use money and position better than he meant to use them? Who could surpass him in self-abhorrence and exaltation of God's cause? And to Mr. Bulstrode God's cause was something distinct from his own rectitude of conduct: it enforced a discrimination of God's enemies, who were to be used merely as instruments, and whom it would be as well if possible to keep out of money and consequent influence. Also, profitable investments in trades where the power of the prince of this world showed its most active devices, became sanctified by a right application of the profits in the hands of God's servant.

"This implicit reasoning is essentially no more peculiar to evangelical belief than the use of wide phrases for narrow motives is peculiar to Englishmen. There is no general doctrine which

is not capable of eating out our morality if unchecked by the deep-seated habit of direct fellow-feeling with individual fellow-men."

There was an "Occasional Sermons Bill," as it was called, brought into the House last session, and quickly disposed of; not being, as some long-suffering hearers might fondly have hoped, a bill to make sermons only "occasional," instead of inevitable as at present, but to allow laymen to preach them "on occasion." It was found that, whether occasionally or constantly, the public would, on the whole, prefer the regular practitioner. But if preachers were to arise from among the laity who could deal with men's consciences with something of the power which is shown from time to time in these pages, one would be glad that they should preach in St. Paul's Cathedral or at Paul's Cross, or wherever they could get the largest audience.

The mental struggle of this man Bulstrode with his great temptation—which we will not anticipate for the reader—is described with wonderful power. How, when disgrace appears to be imminent, he "in vain said to himself that, if permitted, it would be a divine visitation, a chastisement, a burning; but he recoiled from the imagined burning, and he judged that it must be more for the divine glory that he should escape dishonour;" how he prays "that if it were possible the rest of his days here below might be freed from the threat of an ignominy which would break him utterly as an instrument of God's service." In the very crisis of his temptation he rises and spends "some time in private prayer." Do we wonder that it is neither a prayer that the temptation may be removed, nor that a way may be made for him to escape? We are answered by the author in these remarkable words:—

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"Does any one suppose that private prayer is necessarily candid—necessarily goes to the roots of action? Private prayer is inaudible speech, and speech is representative; who can represent himself just as he is, even in his own reflections?"

We must leave our readers to study for themselves the episode which we have here only briefly touched upon, and which, while entirely free from all sensational incident, or any of those artifices by which, in ordinary works of fiction, interest is sought to be excited and maintained, is to our view the most powerful part of these volumes. But we must just remark how simply and beautifully the author has given us the true solution of all that "religious" casuistry which marks the conflict in the soul of Bulstrode, in a few words put into the mouth of Caleb Garth,—slow in speech, but quick in moral perception.

"'You are a conscientious man, Mr. Garth—a man, I trust, who feels himself accountable to God. You would not wish to injure me by being too ready to believe a slander,' said Bulstrode, casting about for pleas that might be adapted to his hearer's mind.

"'I would injure no man if I could help it,' said Caleb; '*even if I thought God winked at it.*'"

A second love-story is worked out in these volumes with a wonderful power of insight into that pathetic tragedy which so often underlies the surface of the most commonplace life. It is the perfect contradictory of poor Dorothea's romance. The dreamer of dreams, in this second case, is the gentleman and not the lady. The town of Middlemarch has been somewhat excited, in its quiet way, by the advent of a young surgeon—a Mr. Lydgate ("one of the Lydgates of Northumberland, really well connected," as the Dowager Lady Chettam observes), a very good type of one class—

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it is much to be wished that it were a larger class—of his profession. He is clever, well-read, and gentleman-like; “has ideas, you know,” says Mr. Brooke, “and wants to raise the profession.” He has in his mind the ideal of a wife, as Miss Brooke had of a husband. But this ideal he would have been very far from finding in Dorothea. When he meets that young lady at a dinner which her uncle gives to some of the Middlemarch notables, he looks upon her with a kind of curious admiration.

“Her youthful bloom, with her approaching marriage to that faded scholar, and her interest in matters socially useful, gave her the piquancy of an unusual combination.

“She is a good creature—that fine girl—but a little too earnest,” he thought. “It is troublesome to talk to such women. They are always wanting reasons, yet they are too ignorant to understand the merits of any question, and usually fall back on their moral sense to settle things after their own taste.”

The lady of his fancy, whom he thinks he has already seen, and whose somewhat commonplace character he views through the same kind of haze as that with which Dorothea has surrounded her hero, is a being cast in quite another mould. He had not yet quite fallen in love; but he had said of that particular woman, “She is grace itself—she is perfectly lovely and accomplished. That is what a woman ought to be—she ought to produce the effect of exquisite music.” To adorn her husband’s life is his view of the mission of woman.

“Lydgate felt sure that, if ever he married, his wife would have that distinctive womanhood which must be classed with flowers and music—that sort of beauty which by its very nature was virtuous, being moulded only for pure and delicate joys.”

“To his taste, guided by a single conversation, here was the point on

which Miss Brooke would be found wanting, notwithstanding her undeniable beauty. She did not look on things from the proper feminine angle. The society of such women was about as relaxing as going from your work to teach the second form, instead of reclining in a paradise with sweet laughs for bird-notes and blue eyes for a heaven.”

How far this paradise is ever realised for the ambitious young surgeon—how far bird-notes and blue eyes suffice to make a man’s heaven on earth—especially a man who, like Lydgate, “had meant to lead a higher life than the common,”—we leave to be discovered in the volumes which follow. Nor have we space to deal with the love fortunes of Fred Vincy and Mary Garth, who have no great ideals to dazzle or disappoint them; though we may say that this latter young lady became our own personal favourite from her first appearance, not only from her uncompromising honesty, and tendency to show a little temper, but from a presentiment that these plain brown girls, towards the end of third volumes, have a tendency to improve into something very charming in their way.

The episode of the Middlemarch election reminds us of some of the scenes in ‘Felix Holt.’ Though the story itself dates back to the days of “Mr. Peel” and the Catholic Question, we see some of the political and social problems of our own times already casting their shadows before them, and they are evidently present to the author’s mind. No opinions can well be less conservative, in one sense, than those of the author of ‘Middlemarch,’ if Conservatism means, as its enemies would assert, the maintenance of shams and abuses. But, as all readers of ‘Felix Holt’ will remember, George Eliot’s radicalism, if radicalism it be, is of a very unpopular type. No one sees more clearly in-

to the hollowness of political clap-trap and declamation. Ladislaw, who goes in for what we are now pleased to call purity of election, has to stop his ears when he finds that "the means of enlisting the voter's ignorance on the side of the Bill were remarkably similar to the means of enlisting it against the Bill." Mr. Brooke himself is chuckling at the prospect of promotion in the Church which he foresees for Mr. Casaubon, as a reward for "a very seasonable pamphlet on the Catholic Question." "He little thought," says our author, "of the Radical speech which he was hereafter to make on the incomes of the Bishops."

"But of Mr. Brooke I make a further remark, namely, that if he had foreknown his speech, it might not have made any great difference. To think with pleasure of his niece's husband having a large ecclesiastical income was one thing—to make a liberal speech was another thing; and it is a narrow mind which cannot look at a subject from various points of view."

That poor gentleman's feelings, as he stands in his "buff waistcoat, short-clipped blond hair, and neutral physiognomy" (have we not all seen him?) in the balcony of the White Hart, and his terrible collapse, owing chiefly to the unfortunate fact which he had himself observed, "that ~~the~~ ~~ideas~~ stood rather in his way when he was speaking," are very amusingly described, and the speech itself is quite a gem in its way. Its hopeless floundering and good-humored irrelevancy must appear, we should be afraid, to some country gentlemen who have been in similar difficulties, even too painfully real.

There is one observation which strikes us more forcibly in reading these volumes than in any others which have come to us from the same hand. It is the power which the writer shows in awakening, not

only our interest in, but our sympathies with, nearly all the prominent characters in the full drama of the story. In most novels, there is at least some one creation of the author's fancy on whose brightness a shadow is seldom allowed to fall, in whose cause we become partisans, and whose greatest weaknesses are cleverly excused. Or, if the hero or heroine are not so near perfection in the outset, some discipline or other is introduced in the course of the story, which in the end completes and purifies the character. And in some sense, if the novelist is to be regarded as a moral teacher, this seems in accordance with the fitness of things. But such is by no means the principle upon which the author of 'Middlemarch' works. We find in the volumes nothing of the conventional hero or heroine. As, even in the most disagreeable characters, we are shown in almost every instance the good that is working in them fitfully here and there, so in the portraits of the favourites the shadows are not left out. The only personages in the story with whom we are never angry or disappointed are those in whom we are never called upon to take any very lively interest—who have not character enough to involve contradictions—such as Sir James Chettam and Celia. Dorothea provokes us continually in the first book, until we scarcely pity her, though we can foresee much of the result, when she marries Casaubon; there is an epicurean selfishness about Lydgate, in spite of his nobler aspirations, which makes us feel that the lower form of selfishness in others from which he is made to suffer has in it something of retributive justice; Ladislaw is full of weaknesses and irresolution. On the other hand, there is no one who acts thoroughly the "villain" in the piece; Rosamond, who most rouses our indignation, is after all more

contemptible than hateful; there is no one in whose frustrated designs the virtuous reader (what a tribute it is to the divinity of righteousness that we all become so virtuous when we sit down to read!) feels the sort of triumph which David proclaims over his enemies. Casaubon, with all his pedantic narrowness, is, perhaps, the most pathetic conception in the book; and when Bulstrode is at last exposed and makes his miserable exit, so intensely have we been made to feel the mental agony and bitter humiliation of the man, that we are inclined to take his arm, as Lydgate does, and help him to his carriage. The creatures are all so intensely human, even in their baser aspects, that in spite of that seven-fold shield of virtue behind which we shelter ourselves, as has been said, when we sit in judgment on the characters of fiction, an honest conscience hesitates to cast the stone.

There is as little of overt love-making in these volumes as is consistent with the indispensable conditions of modern story-telling; but if any readers wish to see how gracefully such a subject may be treated, let them turn to the scene in the library at Lowick Manor, in chapter 88.

In this, as in all the author's previous works, there is an embarrassing abundance of tempting morsels for extract. Something purely original, or so quaintly put as to make it original, might be found on almost every page; passages on which the mind lingers as the eye does on a clever picture, long after it has thoroughly taken in every detail of the subject. One is tempted to half-close the volume from time to time, either to indulge a silent laugh, or to digest some epigrammatic truth which opens a new vein of thought within ourselves. In each of these brief passages there are materials for an essay or a sermon:—

"Suppose we turn from outside estimates of a man, to wonder, with keener interest, what is the report of his own consciousness about his doings or capacity: with what hindrances he is carrying on his daily labours; what fading of hopes, or what deeper fixity of self-delusion the years are marking off within him; and with what spirit he wrestles against universal pressure, which will one day be too heavy for him, and bring his heart to its final pause. Doubtless his lot is important in his own eyes; and the chief reason that we think he asks too large a place in our consideration must be our want of room for him, since we refer him to the Divine regard with perfect confidence; nay, it is even held sublime for our neighbour to expect the utmost there, however little he may have got from us."—Vol. i., p. 144.

"We do not expect people to be deeply moved by what is not unusual. That element of tragedy which lies in the very fact of frequency has not yet wrought itself into the coarse emotion of mankind; and perhaps our frames could hardly bear much of it. If we had a keen vision and feeling of all ordinary human life, it would be like hearing the grass grow and the squirrel's heart beat, and we should die of that roar which lies on the other side of silence. As it is, the quickest of us walk about well-wadded with stupidity."—Vol. i., p. 351.

"Character is not cut in marble—it is not something solid and unalterable. It is something living and changing, and may become diseased as our bodies do."—Vol. iv., p. 182.

Old Mr. Featherstone's views of the Old Testament dispensation are as original, in their way, as those of Tennyson's "Northern Farmer":—

"There's one thing I made out pretty clear when I used to go to church—and it's this: God, A'mighty sticks to the land. He promises land and He gives land, and He makes chaps rich with corn and cattle."

Solomon Featherstone was "not only of much blander temper, but thought himself much deeper than his brother Peter:—"

"Indeed, not likely to be deceived

in any of his fellow-men, inasmuch as they could not well be more greedy and deceitful than he suspected them of being. Even the invisible powers, he thought, were likely to be soothed by a bland parenthesis here and there, coming from a man of property, who might have been as impious as others."

Mrs. Cadwallader's social creed is stated for her in terms which, if they have all the severity of finished satire, have yet in them a lesson of the widest charity, and of a kind which to many of us is the most difficult of all to receive: for it is often much more easy to extend indulgence to our neighbours' sins than to their social deficiencies:—

"Her feeling towards the vulgar rich was a sort of religious hatred: they had probably made all their money out of high retail prices, and Mrs. Cadwallader detested high prices for everything that was not paid in kind at the Rectory: such people were no part of God's design in making the world; and their accent was an affliction to the ears. A town where such monsters abounded was hardly more than a sort of low comedy, which could not be taken account of in a well-bred scheme of the universe. Let any lady who is inclined to be hard on Mrs. Cadwallader inquire into the comprehensiveness of her own beautiful views, and be quite sure that they afford accommodation for all the lives which have the honour to co-exist with hers."

The *Middlemarch* interpretation of "candour" is probably not confined to that town, where it meant the "taking an early opportunity to let your friends know that you did not take a cheerful view of their capacity, their conduct, or their position." Nor is Mrs. Waule's notion of the absurdity of using ceremony between blood relations pecu-

liar to that lady; "she was accustomed to think that entire freedom from the necessity of behaving agreeably was included in the Almighty's intentions about families."

One brief extract more, and we will close the volumes. It is a little sermon, containing more than many long ones, upon a text from the 'Pilgrim's Progress'—a passage from the trial of Faithful, which stands as a motto to the last chapter but one:—

"When immortal Bunyan makes his picture of the persecuting passions bringing in their verdict of guilty, who pities Faithful? That is a rare and blessed lot which some greatest men have not attained, to know ourselves guiltless before a condemning crowd—to be sure that what we are denounced for is solely the good in us. The pitiable lot is that of the man who could not call himself a martyr even though he were to persuade himself that the men who stoned him were but ugly passions incarnate—who knows that he is stoned, not for professing the Right, but for not being the man he professed to be."

'So we take our leave of a work which, if it stood alone, would have made an era in the literature of fiction. Following, as it does, a series of acknowledged masterpieces from the same hand, which gave a new character to the English "novel," it would have been much to have been able to say that it maintained the reputation of its author. But we shall be surprised if the mature judgment passed upon it by those who can appreciate the work of a true artist—and we will admit that these may not be the majority of mere novel readers—does not pronounce it the most perfect of the series.

NEW BOOKS.

THE readers of new books must be, according to their inclinations, delighted, or bored, by the great prevalence in the literary world of the art of biography. Wherever one turns, this is the kind of fare which meets one's eye. Baron Stockmar on one side, Count de Montalembert on the other, take up the historical vein, and accumulate "*memoires pour servir*" to future labourers in a still graver and more important field; while all the prejudices of our youth are appealed to in favour of Captain Marryat; and such names as those of Henry Lawrence on one side, and Thomas Brassey on the other, lead us into most varied scenes of active life, and recall to us the great events occurring within the limits of our own recollection, with which the air has scarcely ceased to tingle. This rapid portrait-painting has advantages and disadvantages. It procures us in many cases a more real picture of the man than any which can be made up later from the memoranda of failing memories or the traditions of an age which has already forgotten the departed hero. It gives us life, colour, and movement; but unfortunately it gives us often the imperfect effect of a picture seen too near—a want of perspective, an absence of atmosphere, and that due sense of proportion which has so much to do with the success of biography. The contemporary historian is apt to become confused between those great crises which affect a man's life, and the smaller crises, often bulking quite as largely at the moment of their occurrence, which affect only his comfort or his position; and to find a difficulty in discriminating and

holding fast the main thread of his use and purpose, amid the maze of crossing threads which compose his daily life. To these disadvantages may be added the occasional difficulty of saying all that ought to be said while there are still many persons living, liable to be deeply wounded or injured by some sidelight thrown upon them, or revelation of unknown events in their history. It is unquestionable, however, that, did the world wait fifty, nay, twenty years, to give itself time to step back and see the effect far off of the great figures which dazzle it at the moment, the biographies written would be much less numerous. Whether this would be for our advantage or no we do not feel called upon to decide. For our own part, we avow there is no branch of literature more captivating to us. Every life has its romance, its dramatic combinations, its struggle of ill and well; and when we are called upon, as it were, to take our seats in a wider Colosseum, and see this man and that, this woman and that, descending to struggle with the lions, to fall or to stand, to be beaten down and rise again, and at last to be carried from the arena with victor shouts and wreaths, or with the low wailings of the fallen,—the spectacle is always interesting and exciting. It has that perennial charm of fellow-feeling, that desire to behold our fellow-men in situations like our own, and struggles like our own, which is the fundamental standing-ground of all poetry and fiction—with the additional advantage superadded, which is so dear to the simple mind, of knowing every incident and every conflict to be true.

The life of Sir Henry Lawrence* is one of those highly dramatic lives which require but little imagination on our part to perceive their picturesque qualities. The manner of the story is so far curious, besides all its intrinsic interest, that two voices are employed in the narrative—one the lively, breathless, and somewhat careless voice of a fellow-actor in the same drama, a man himself moved to sympathetic elation or depression by all that happens to his hero, by that best right of all, the fact that these very things happened to himself, and form part and parcel of his own life: the other the calmer impartial utterance of a philosophic stranger to whom Henry Lawrence is no more than an interesting and remarkable man, to be judged only on his merits, whose history can be told without excitement, without any quickening of the breath or beating of the heart. As it happens, these two voices take up the tale in such divisions as poetry would have apportioned to them, had that Muse, and not a darker and more solemn one, been the cause of the conjunction. The youth, the rise and progress, the love-tale, and outset upon life, fall to the share of the sympathetic historian; and when the tale becomes grave, when a serious estimate of public events becomes necessary, then with curious appropriateness the philosophical spectator takes up the thread which the other had dropped. Sir Herbert Edwardes does not always write with taste, nor is his style a model of good English. It is careless, often tawdry, and aims at false effects; but its jauntiness is at least natural, and its very affectation full of that simplicity which inclines us to forgive the soldier-writer for many slips and much aberration from the strict path of art. It is a difficult question whether ab-

solute impartiality is to be desired either in the biographer or the historian. So long as both give their facts correctly, we doubt whether the warmth of personal feeling does not add a certain charm to the picture. It is a poor view of that power which gives us the deepest insight into human affairs, to say that love is blind. True affection may glorify but cannot falsify the image it holds forth to the world; and indeed it might almost be said that the gifts which secure to a man a thorough partisan in his friend, are themselves a kind of evidence that he is worth glorifying having had power to create an affection which lives after him. However that may be, we are glad at least that Lawrence's early days are drawn by the kind and faulty hand of his loyal follower, and not by the severely truthful and unprejudiced pen of Mr. Merivale; though the value of the latter half of the work composed by that gentleman is infinitely greater, both historically and in a literary point of view, than the slapdash narrative of the soldier. Mr. Merivale has the graver half of the task to accomplish—that half of life in which the glitter of youth has died off, the dew dried up, and men begin to reap the fruits of that which themselves have sown for good or for evil. And when much becomes complicated and doubtful—when there is something to praise, but also something to blame—when the hero comes in contact with other heroes, and has not always the best of it—we can fully appreciate the impartiality of the historian, whose aim is to give us the shadows along with the lights, and enable us to judge as well as to know. But we confess to so much human weakness in favour of the momentary object

* The Life of Sir Henry Lawrence. By the late Major-General Sir Herbert Benjamin Edwardes, K.C.B., K.C.S.I., and Herman Merivale, Esq., C.B. 2 vols. Smith, Elder, and Co., London. 1872.

of our immediate interest, as to be glad that Mr. Merivale was not our guide from the beginning, to point out to us those failings in the bold and steadfast boy which we can see for ourselves in the full-grown man. Here we prefer Sir Herbert Edwardes, though he writes badly, and runs into sometimes silly apostrophes and outbursts of admiring feeling. He too has gone away into the silence, leaving a life full of heroic instincts—an example to stimulate the generation which comes after him. Literary criticism would be misplaced in respect to such a broken and unfinished piece of work. We feel the friendly fervour, the honest and genuine partisanship, which commends both men to our liking; and the sympathy touches us, if not the skill.

The father of Henry Lawrence, or, to speak more justly, of five stout Lawrences, all servants of their country, three of whom have come to the higher rewards which England, though with grudging, deals to her faithful servants, and two of whom have acquired real fame—was a brave old hot-tempered and perennially grumbling soldier, who had fought his way without friends, to the rank of colonel, having poked himself into every danger going, from the age of fourteen to fifty, leading forlorn hopes, scaling perilous breaches, getting himself left for dead under the blazing eastern sun, and running through a double share of all the hardships involved in the career of a poor and energetic soldier. He fought his way to every grade with bitter effort, fighting with sword as well as pen, and retired at last upon a miserably inadequate pension, to scold Government and rear his boys, leaving to them not only the inheritance of his high character and high courage, but also of his grievances—an inheritance which showed itself afterwards in

the hereditary tendency to take offence and think himself injured, from which not even the high Christian qualities of his mind could quite emancipate Sir Henry Lawrence. The good and wise mother, who "kept the family together, and brought us all up on very slender means," advised one of her sons on his departure from India, "not to be too ready to speak his mind." "It was the rock on which your father shipwrecked all his prospects," she said; and these few words throw wonderful light upon the story of the struggling family—the ready-tongued and ready-witted father, incapable of silence or inactivity, and the patient woman who had to keep all going and to back up her vociferous husband, while secretly feeling all the harm he was doing. They were both, however, true, honest, and genuine, ruling their flock with old-fashioned absolutism, bringing them up in the fear of God and the restraints of an honourable poverty—perhaps the best conditions under which men and soldiers can be trained. Besides the good mother of the house, the boys had an "Aunt Angel," worthy of her name, who devoted herself to works of charity, and taught them gentle lessons of religion in the confidential seclusion of her room; and a high-spirited sister Letitia, of whom it is told that, having been visited by her father at school, and buoyed up with hopes that he would take her home with him, she tore to pieces with indignation a five-pound note which the old veteran, not brave enough to face her tears, sent her by way of farewell ere he stole off without seeing her. This sister was Henry Lawrence's most beloved and trusted friend through life.

The boys began their education in Ireland, from whence both father and mother originally came; not, however, the Ireland which is Irish,

but that division of the island in which Saxon toughness and Scotch strength of will (if the distinction is worth making) seem to have intensified into double hardheadedness and rough force, by contact with the different qualities of the more impassioned aboriginal race. "Do you think we were clever as lads?" Henry Lawrence asked his brother John one night years after, and thousands of miles away, in a night-watch in the midst of the Indian wars. I don't think we were, Lord Lawrence, the brother John in question, adds simply; "it was not altogether that we were dull: we had very few advantages, and were backward and deficient." Heaven send us always enough of such dull boys! But all authorities agree that neither of these two Lawrences would have had the slightest hope of ever getting to India had the days of competitive examination begun, a most pregnant comment, worthy the attention of all governing persons, if governing persons can be expected to have either eyes or ears. At fourteen, however, Henry Lawrence entered Addiscombe, where his brother George already was. Here he was distinguished among his comrades by the name of Pat Lawrence, probably from his readiness to resent "any reflection upon Ireland," and is described as "a very rough Irish lad, hardbodied, iron-constitutioned, who would, when necessary, take or give a licking with a good grace." "He was," says Major Abbott, "quick of temper, stern of resolution, the determined foe of everything mean, bullying, or skulking." He did not take a high grade in any branch of education, but was "a zealous student, endeavouring to supply by soul and labour the quickness which had been denied to him." Even in sport he had no skill to boast of, but was fond of all manly exercises,

"and was ever to be found where they were carried on, his head meanwhile full of poetry, which he omitted no opportunity to spout in a loud voice in the intervals of the game."

This last particular is amusing enough. Lawrence had a strong literary bias throughout his whole life, and it reveals to us as well as anything can, the changed mental condition of our boys when we hear of this big Irish lad "spouting" Scott's poetry, his favourite love, "in a loud voice," over the heads of the eager circle of cricketers or football players without ridicule or remark. What lad spouts Scott nowadays? or cares for any minstrelsy half so wholesome or practical? Notwithstanding, however, his defective education, and still more defective "quickness," ambition was in this boy's soul. He declined a cavalry appointment in the Indian service, "lest it should be supposed that no Lawrence could pass for the artillery!" And he did pass for the artillery, as he deserved, after this delightful outburst of family pride. In 1822, being then eighteen, he sailed for India, and there fell among one of those curious little companies of evangelical young soldiers who have long represented quite a distinct feature in our British army, both in India and elsewhere. This youthful brotherhood lived together under the superintendence of the clergyman, who had converted them all, in one of those semi-monastic communities which religious feeling, when highly excited, flies to, by instinct, everywhere. It is curious to see how this impulse triumphs over the profoundest Protestantism of doctrine. Contact with these young believers decided Lawrence's life in this most important matter. He never was a Have-lock or a Hedley Vicars, Providence and his own original character

preserving him from the painful phraseology and narrowed sentiment of these good men. But without saying much about it, without sermonising either in public or private, he put himself silently and steadfastly on the side of religion, giving to its more demonstrative champions that support and backing-up which is of much more use than an additional voice.

We need not, however, follow the young soldier minutely through his career. He fell ill and had to be sent home, where he fell in love, as was meet and right, though with a modesty and humility which required the aid once more of his spirited sister Letty to bring the pretty romance to its fit conclusion in an entirely happy marriage. The character of his wife, who died some time before him, is given in the book with a fulness which, perhaps, is a little indiscreet; though so good and pious and fine a character has no need of concealment. She was a woman full of eloquence and enthusiasm, given to much writing, warm in admiration of natural beauty, and with a considerable faculty for description of it, devoted to reading and literature generally—a woman who might well make a lonely Indian station tolerable, and keep warm the life of sentiment and thought as well as the hearth of domestic comfort; but whom the scoffing world outside might describe as sentimental and visionary, if it would. The great events in Lawrence's life were connected with the two great temporary failures of recent government in India—the old Afghanistān war, where the catastrophe of Cabul and the captivity of a number of English prisoners, gave a kind of anticipatory sketch, fortunately ending in a much less disastrous way, of the miseries of 1857; and the great Mutiny itself, to which his life was sacrificed in its fulness

and power. Before the Mutiny the story of Cabul was a most exciting one, and there are, no doubt, many readers of this book who will recollect the ferment of public sentiment in England when it was known that a handful of Englishmen and Englishwomen were in captivity among those unknown mountains, and that our unconquered flag had stooped to the savage ensigns of a heathen prince. It was on this occasion that Henry Lawrence was first able to display the vast energy and power that distinguished his character. He was greatly instrumental in the passage of the Khyber Pass, which was the key of the position, and which, when in the possession of the English, made their further progress comparatively easy. It had been concluded that Lawrence, then acting as political agent, was not to accompany the army who stormed the pass, a senior political officer having claimed the privilege. Much discontented with this decision, he yet gained from General Pollock permission to "take a couple of guns up the little hill inside the defile;" and in short, as Sir Herbert Edwardes expresses it, to "go on by instalments." Here is an account of him on the morning of this momentous attack:—

"Sir George Pollock still recalls how about three o'clock in the morning he repaired to Lawrence's tent, in order that they might start together with the main column, and found him sitting up deadly sick and vomiting, apparently attacked by cholera. The general was obliged to leave him in this desperate condition, and says, 'I did not expect ever to see him again alive;' but to his great surprise when he reached the front of the pass there was Henry Lawrence with the guns, helping to get them into position—all bodily infirmities subdued by force of will and sense of duty. . . . 'At 2 p.m.,' as he himself describes the occurrence, 'I was very ill, but dressed, and at 4 led the column down to the pass, plac-

ing the guns in position; and all the morning doing duty with the guns or attending General Pollock. I got the first gun, a mountain howitzer, through the barricade, as soon as a small opening was made in it, and opened it on the enemy; and when opposition appeared to have ceased I returned to Jumrood, taking with me some twenty wounded men, and immediately arranged to get water carried to the rear-guard."

How he had thrown himself into the always difficult question of the commissariat, collecting provisions and water for the army—and all the trouble he had with the Sikhs, who were sometimes insolent, sometimes indifferent, we cannot enter into. But the manner in which he seems to have darted up and down this tremendous pass, carrying news, bringing away the wounded, escorting provision trains, doing "a hundred intelligent and thoughtful acts which everybody else was too busy to attend to," is picturesque enough in its cool daring to arouse the reader into admiring excitement. Those dashing journeys back and forward through the jaws of hell, which were totally out of the letter of his duty, were all performed with a business-like and practical calm which almost succeeds, as it is intended to do, in veiling the brilliancy of the achievement. After this it is conceivable that Lawrence might well feel aggrieved when he was thanked in General Pollock's despatches as a "political." "All here know I was engaged," he said, with a certain whimper of vexation, which endears the stout soldier to us. "I shall be glad if he says, 'Captain Lawrence served with the guns.'"

The literary phase of Lawrence's life, however, which is, as may be supposed, quite secondary, and of no manner of importance in comparison with his great and many public services, here unfolds a quaint and unexpected chapter. We do not know whether the accom-

plished author of the 'Battle of Dorking' is aware of the illustrious rival who preceded him in that vein of satire and criticism. Lawrence's essay is neither so able nor imbued with so much tragic meaning as the 'Battle of Dorking;' but in itself the enterprise of "Darby Connor," who, in the pages of the 'Delhi Gazette' let loose his opinion on the crisis before his eyes, in the shape of a historical narrative, purporting to be written by that officer in his English retirement in the year 1855, fourteen years later than the date of publication—is sufficiently striking to attract the reader. Miracles are more possible in India than in England, and the Indian 'Battle of Dorking' is written by an optimist, who takes it for granted that the best scheme for setting matters right was as likely to be accepted in public as in private enterprise. After giving a rapid sketch of the state of India at the moment of the disasters at Cabul—how "the foundations of British rule were shaken;" "all Hindostan was in a blaze;" the cry of "the Feringhee Raj is over, resounded from one coast to another;" and how Lord Jamaica (Sir C. Metcalfe) had sent a confidential circular, calling upon "every man who bore a commission to state in a letter not exceeding half a sheet of foolscap paper, his views as to the steps now requisite to regain and maintain our authority in Affghanistan, adding a descriptive roll of himself, according to a prescribed form"—Lawrence, under the slight disguise of his assumed character, thus goes on in answer to this supposititious circular, to disclose what he thought necessary, and what he was prepared to do:—

"My Lord,—I have the honour, in pursuance of the Government notification of the 12th August, to submit, for your lordship's consideration, a descriptive roll of myself and a statement of my views:—

Name.	Age.	Father's Profession.	Place of Birth.	Place of Education.	Date of Commission.	Term of Service.	Remarks.
Darby Connor	37	Soldier	Cork	Tipperary	1825	20 years	Healthy, active, industrious; served in Burmah, and hoped to serve elsewhere, but had not the luck.

"Lord Auckland's Afghan expedition barely escaped failure, because the fundamental rules that guide men in their individual and collective capacities, *when working for themselves*, were neglected. Allow me, my Lord, to illustrate my meaning by two comparisons, 'the establishment of a brewery,' and 'an expedition into Central Africa.'

"The capitalist, who proposes to try his luck in the malt line, either studies the theory and practice of his business, or employs, on a remunerative salary, an honest, active, and thoroughly competent person as head of the work, and looks out equally fitting instruments for every part of the establishment, down to the errand-boy. No working berth is filled by a mere brother, son, or cousin; if any relative or friend wishes for employment, he enters *as a scholar*; the machine is made efficient without him, and he is permitted to attend and learn. Every improvement is adopted, good beer is made, and large profits accrue, because the proper means have been used, and the one specific object has been kept in view.

"Again, on a discovery expedition, who is selected? The infirm, the pusillanimous, the unwilling; or the volunteers of stout body and firm heart?

"And does he take with him the luxuries of the capital, the gratifications of taste, or simply what will sustain life and strength, and the instruments to enable him to profit by his discoveries? And whom does he choose for companions but those like-minded and like-bodied, who are desirous to go?

"Now will your Lordship contrast with the above the conduct of the Indian Army assembled in 1838? Take the *Army List* for that year, and examine how many went that should not, and how many that would have gone stayed behind; then cast your eyes on the files of newspapers for the

ensuing year, and you will see that, from bickerings and jealousies in high places, from persons interfering in matters with which they should have had nothing to do, and thwarting the measures of those who had knowledge and responsibility, no efficient arrangement was made in any one branch of the army, which started clogged with infirm, home-sick, and aged men, and retarded by want of information and arrangement.

"In some of the most important matters, every man did that which was right in his own eyes; in others of minor moment, each was afraid to act, and take the responsibility on himself.

"Avoiding the errors of this last war, I, therefore, propose to your Lordship an army of 6000 men, drawn from all the Presidencies; 3000 to march by Dera Ishmael Khan, 1500 by the Bolan, and 1500 by the Khyber Pass.

"2. That no officer above the rank of captain be permitted to go.

"3. That the officer in command of the expedition be supreme political as well as military authority; that he have full power to weed his battalions, to leave behind all whom he may deem incumbrances, and accept the proffered services of all volunteers; that, in short, receiving your Lordship's instructions, he have full powers to carry out the views of Government at the time and in the manner that seems to himself most practicable.

"That from highest to lowest, he fill up all staff situations, and that, as responsible for the result, he have the selection of his own instruments. For other campaigns, I volunteered for subordinate employment, but my services were not accepted; on this occasion I offer myself as chief, and, feeling that my services will be accepted, I shall be prepared on receipt of your

Lordship's answer to join without delay the headquarter camp, for I need not say that little more than the necessary time now remains to enable the necessary preparations.—I have, &c. **DARBY CONNOR.**"

"LUCKNOW,
August 21st 1845."

This frank offer is instantly accepted by the wise Governor-General, and Darby finds himself immediately at the head of a staff of his own selection, of ages ranging from his own (38) to 27, "all hale and hearty fellows, all ready for a tumasha."—(Is there any need to translate so comprehensible a word?) One of the commander's first acts is to take a torch after dinner, "and with my own hand burn a new splendid double-poled tent, just made for me by Nyn Sookh, the best tentmaker in India," by way of giving practical illustration of the uselessness of luxury. Brigadier Darby Connor did not take his men into action, which might have converted his prophetic campaign into an ugly vehicle of criticism; but this escapade of fancy is notable as well as amusing, showing at once his thorough insight into Indian affairs, and the noble impatience of the really capable worker compelled to stand by and see the incapable in office—which, alas! is not confined to the unemployed soldier alone.

We have occupied too much space with these preliminaries, to enter into the great work of his life, the pacification and regulation of the Punjab, a work which stood the British Government in much stead, when the desperate crisis of the Mutiny arrived, and the people whom Lawrence had moulded, so to speak, with his very hands, gave invaluable, and indeed indispensable aid, at the most critical moment. Mr. Merivale, to whom by this time the narrative has fallen, gives full particulars of this work, as well as

of the unhappy misunderstanding and conflict of opinions, which drove Sir Henry Lawrence out of this noble post, and condemned him in the prime of his life to an interval of dignified deposition. Mr. Merivale, contrary to the habit of biographers, considers Lord Dalhousie and Lord Lawrence to have been in the right, and the subject of his narrative in the wrong; but the question is too long and serious to be entered upon here. Mr. Merivale writes with all the dignity and power of a practised historian, and his story is lucid and interesting. It reveals to us incidentally one of the most curious aspects of that wonderful mystery of Indian Government, which is one of the greatest marvels under heaven. That vast country, full of wealth of every kind, full of valour and energy, as was afterwards proved to our help and consolation, and of intellect strong and subtle, lay, passive and helpless, while these three Europeans fought fiercely over it, to determine its future fate, its independence or subjugation. If the risks are enormous, there can be no doubt that such an absolute sense of power must be intoxicating beyond description—the highest excitement possible to man.

No one needs to be told how Henry Lawrence died, struck down in the beginning of the tragic struggle at Lucknow, in all the agony of an undecided conflict, with everything looking ill for the success and honour of his country. But heaven be praised, however dolorous may be our anticipations sometimes at home, no soldier in the field ever entertained the idea that English arms could possibly be beaten; and this most stout and worthy soldier died as calmly as if he had been at home, leaving with his last breath, his children, and the "Lawrence asylums," to the care of his country. The Lawrence asylums were institut-

ed for the education of the children of English soldiers in various hill stations, where the climate made existence possible. Thus the large and noble charity which had pervaded his whole life, was associated with the last and most intimate movement of his heart towards those who were his very own. His wife, one feels glad to think, had died some time before.

The life of Mr. Brassey* is given to us by a writer who has all the right to be didactic which is conferred by a long course of volunteer teaching—teaching which has, no doubt, been appreciated by a large number of people, and conveyed its own deep consciousness of intellectual superiority to many readers. The present book, however, though full of facts touching the subject of the narrative, gives us much more insight into Mr. Helps than into Mr. Brassey. In this respect, though perhaps in no other, it is an amusing book. There is, we cannot but feel, a certain absurdity in placing it by the side of the work which we have just dismissed, and in which—represented too carelessly for one part, and perhaps too philosophically for the other—a man nevertheless appears at full length, struggling through both veils of literary adornment, with much reality of thought and action. Mr. Brassey—we use the title always given to him by his present biographer, who is never sufficiently warmed by his subject to cut off the formal prefix—has no such luck. That he had an individuality worth recording is apparent enough; but Mr. Helps's life is something between a counsel's defence of a defendant at the bar and an object-lesson. Perhaps it is the latter form of composition which we are most reminded

of. Here is a great railway contractor, says our teacher, who did a great deal of work and made a great deal of money; but how did he do it? He did it by certain qualities which I can classify, and which will be exhibited to you on my black-board, as follows:—"Mr. Brassey's trustfulness: . . . This virtue was carried to a great extent in him, to an extent that may appear almost extreme. He chose his agents with great care and with consummate judgment. After he had chosen them, he placed implicit trust in them." "Liberality: . . . He was exceedingly liberal in the conduct of his business." "Equanimity: He was a man of a singularly calm and equable temperament." "Presence of mind: Mr. Brassey was gifted with much presence of mind." "Hatred of contention: Mr. Brassey had a perfect hatred of contention,"—and so forth throughout the introductory chapter; till fun gets the upper hand, and we feel that the quaintness of thus receiving the essence of a successful man of business done up and labelled in little bundles quite exceeds what might be considered the tedium of the performance. So far for the object-lesson. The character of a defence—surely a most unsatisfactory way of treating a life so universally approved, attacked by no one, and crowned by all possible recompenses of merit from its beginning to its end—is probably given by the mode of collecting material, which Mr. Helps confides to us as follows:—

"This work has been written in a very peculiar manner. Most of the persons who knew Mr. Brassey well, who had acted with him, or served under him, have kindly consented to be examined as witnesses, and to have their evidence taken down by a shorthand-writer. Mr. Thomas

* The Life and Labours of the late Mr. Brassey. By Sir Arthur Helps, K.C.B. Bell and Daldy, London: 1872.

Brassey has been the examiner. From his general knowledge of his father's affairs, no one could have fulfilled this office so well; and I gratefully acknowledge the immense assistance that I have derived from the mode in which he has conducted these examinations."

It would be presumptuous were we to attempt to instruct a veteran like Mr. Helps as to the best way of acquiring information on such subjects; but it requires but a very small knowledge of the mental habits of ordinary men to be aware how little advantage a formal second-hand investigation of this kind can be to a biographer. Facts he would no doubt acquire by the bushel; but character evades the giver and the receiver of evidence. How often, after painfulest guiding of conversation—a much less formal process—towards a special subject, is the biographical student ready to give up in despair, when his informant, prefacing the remark with, "This, however, is scarcely worth telling," will suddenly and unconsciously reward him with some real indication of the character he is trying to master! In nineteen out of twenty cases, however, the speaker is guilelessly astonished—puzzled, even amused, that this final scrap should be considered of any importance: the inquirer sinks in his opinion from that moment. Whether these subtle touches could be got at in Mr. Helps's way we leave the reader to decide; but there are very few of them to be met with in this volume. It is the life of a railway contractor who might be "Mr." anything you please, as well as Mr. Brassey; it is no picture of a recognisable man. There are plenty of railways and navvies in it, incredible lists of work, and fabulous heaps of money; but it requires work as steady as Mr. Brassey's to engineer out of the mass anything

like the features of an individual. This we will attempt to do as best we can. Mr. Helps expresses himself very strongly as to the inexpediency of sons writing memoirs of their fathers—"What a son says," he tells us, "is always a little 'suspicious.'" "Notwithstanding the familiarity of converse which has grown up of late years between sons and fathers, sons are apt to be not the less proud, and perhaps even more fond of their fathers than ever; and on that account not the less unfit to write their lives." This judgment he repeats on various occasions throughout the book, but, unfortunately for his theory, the chapter contributed by Mr. Thomas Brassey—though unfortunately reduced to something like a brief for counsel by the freak of the author—is the only real biographical chapter in the book, and feels like an opening into genuine human life, after the arid miles of railway which the unhappy reader has to stumble over before he gets to it. By the help of this, and some scattered fragments of the qualities labelled by Mr. Helps, we can make out something of what the great contractor must have been.

He was not a better kind of navy with genius, as many people suppose, but the descendant of an old Cheshire family, not great, but worthy, possessing an old manor-house, and all the priceless advantages which belong to a race pertinaciously clinging to some foothold of hereditary soil. He married early a wise and high-spirited woman, one of those who push a husband on, instead of holding him back. Evidently from his very outset in life he was a man foredoomed to prosperity, as some men are—doing the right thing at the right time, born to that supreme luck which is indeed generally associated with the supreme energy, patience, pertinacity,

and good temper, which are as much the temperament of the successful man of business, as visionary waywardness, thoughtlessness, and passion are supposed to be the temperament of genius. Brassey began life as a surveyor and maker of roads, but falling at the very commencement into the more lucrative way of railroads, gradually progressed from one piece of work to another, till he gained a kind of infallibility and became the great and universally worshipped Pope of iron ways. Two great faculties helped him in this progress. He was a man who carefully superintended his work on one hand, seeing everything done, and done well; and on the other hand, when personal supervision became impossible, he had the strength of mind to commit his work entirely to other men, never worrying them with interference. This combination of absolute thoroughness in his own labours, and absolute reliance upon the men he had selected, gave him the power which prevails in everything—the same power which makes a great general or a great statesman, as well as a great contractor. He neither bullied, worried, nor thwarted his lieutenants, but gave them fair play, a fair field, and his own example. These lieutenants he sent out north and south, far and near, at the head of their little armies, sometimes making a rapid expedition himself to visit those outposts of his force, at which he was received as a general ought to be, with flags flying and ranks trimmed, and general rejoicing. He had as much *bonhomie* as a Napoleon, and made his industrial reviews and manoeuvres with a generous readiness to acknowledge everybody's merit, and hear everybody's grievance. The navies brightened at the sight of him, as crowds do everywhere on the advent of a popular king. To

hear of the masses of money that went through his lucky fingers is enough to make a poor man's mouth water, and there is something magnificent in the way in which this plain Englishman treated with states and empires on equal terms, halving with them, in an ordinary matter-of-fact manner, the responsibility of millions—of money be it understood. Money, money, seems to lie about the rails and cuttings along which he moves bland, gracious, and gentle, with the manners of a gentleman of the old school, and the energy which is supposed to be characteristic of the new. In short, it is only the lack of genuine human interest in his occupation which holds him back from a very high place among the sober social heroes of modern life. We cannot help it; perhaps it is a deficiency in our own nature—perhaps (an opinion we incline to) it is the fault of Mr. Helps's book; but, alas! we cannot get over the deadening fact that it was only railways upon which this bright intellect, this happy temper, this character full of force and wealth, employed itself. The world gives its reward in good heavy cash, and the country in solid if somewhat languid approbation; but though we only get glimpses of him through the mud walls which Mr. Helps has built round his hero, we feel sure that the man was superior to his work.

Brassey seems to have been one of the few men capable of resisting the intoxicating influence of the money in which he dealt so largely. He was neither devoured with anxiety when the prospect of losing it appeared near, nor dazzled with the certainty of winning it; but held on an even and manly course, living as he liked without show or expenditure beyond the moderate tastes and harmonious comfort which he had enjoyed all his life. He was as little like the class of meteoric par-

venus who scintillate through the social heavens, amusing and pandering to society, as can be supposed. The only "common" thing about him seems to have been a fresh and simple delight in the novelty and beauty he encountered, which is apt to get exhausted in the more cultured races. He did not read, but took in everything his eyes could inform him of, with unusual vividness of vision, and was fond, his son tells us, of hearing speeches, another most natural way in which the primitive unliterary mind finds pleasure in cultivating itself. He watched the more elaborate education of his sons with the proverbial wonder, admiration, and anxiety of the hen with her young ducklings. So Mr. Thomas Brassey tells us, with a touch of tender fun which is worth all Mr. Helps' elaborate classifications. And though he lived simply, and made no show of expenditure, he gave lavishly with that true charity which leaves the left hand ignorant of the gifts of the right hand—spending, it is said, as much as £200,000 during his lifetime in benevolent purposes—a prodigious sum, though perhaps not out of proportion to his fortune. He would turn in the street to look after a handsome guardsman; he would row round and round a fine yacht to admire all her points. Wherever on his business expeditions there were sights to be seen, this healthful simple soul rushed to see them. Let us forgive him, dear reader, that he left several millions (by the time one gets the length of millions does it matter how many?) He was as brave and as gentle as an old knight of romance, full of thought for others, manfully bearing his work and anxieties without brooding over them, which is the

worst malady of the modern man. A little more of him, and a little less of the railways, would have made a much better book.

Nothing can be more curious than to turn from the two men whose lives we have thus discussed, both of them fresh and vigorous offshoots of the homely life and strength of England, to the gentle, refined, over-cultivated, over-good, quintessence of hereditary refinement and goodness which we drop into all at once when we open the volumes entitled, '*Memorials of a Quiet Life*.*' There is, we confess, a certain cruelty in criticising too severely a work inspired by the warmest and rarest filial devotion—the glorification, canonisation—we scarcely know what word strong enough to use—of a mother by her son. A devotion so intense and so pure is rare enough to be above any hard judgment of the fashion, in which it reveals itself; but yet the revelation of a class, herein contained, is too significant to be passed altogether without notice. Mrs. Hare, the wife of Augustus Hare, who, with his brother Julius, afterwards Archdeacon Hare, was the author of a book called, '*Guesses at Truth*,' of which everybody has heard, was unquestionably a woman of very fine and lofty character, full of all the sweetness and charity, the good works and gentle ways, which we all love to dwell on as special characteristics of English gentlewomen. She was connected throughout her life with a most refined, pious, and highly-cultivated circle, including, beside her husband and brother-in-law, such names as those of Reginald Heber, Frederick Maurice, and many more who are well-known to fame. She travelled much, read much,

* *Memorials of a Quiet Life*. By Augustus J. C. Hare. 2 vols. Strahan & Co., London: 1872.

thought much, and was, in short, one of the ornaments, as our grandfathers used to say, of a society which in itself was the ornament and *fine fleur* of English literary, philosophic, and religious life. All such societies, no doubt, produce a great deal of talk and correspondence, in which the greater personages descend to the level of the lower, and the lower strain upwards to the level of the higher, losing all nature in would-be intellectualism, spirituality, and fine expression. There never was a centre of virtuosity yet which did not furnish floods of this highly-superior twaddle. French is the only language which disguises it effectually, by dint of that infallible grace and lightness of touch which seems to be its exclusive possession, and the mingling of wit and anecdote which come natural to it. But all the pumped-up sentiment, all the sham "thoughtfulness," all the dreary lengths and breadths of elegant disquisition which sink the soul of the reader into the very depths, both in German and English—need they be described? Whoever does not know this terrible penalty of being too clever, too wise, too refined, and too good for the ordinary human level, will find it fully displayed in the 'Memorials of a Quiet Life,' which chiefly consists of the correspondence of a number of very admirable persons, well born, well bred, and, alas! only too well educated;—who read, and feel, and think just as they ought, only a little more than is practicable;—who bear their happiness and their losses just as they ought;—who make the best of all their gifts,—are cheerful in adversity, modest in prosperity, and never let one harsh cry or ill-tempered word come out of them from their beginning to their ending. All this is so delightful, and is so delightful; dear reader, by the time you have seen a number of these good

people married, and offered your felicitations, and made merry—no, the expression is too warm—rejoiced, let us say, in their joy; then followed them to their deathbeds, and condoled with the survivors, and seen how admirably, without (once more to speak coarsely) turning a hair, he or she settles down to be good and melancholy, as he or she had been good and glad,—you will, we warn you, be driven to such a pitch of guilty exasperation, that a novel of Ouida's, or even a naughty French story, will seem a comfort to you. People who never are foolish even when they are young, who never cry out when they are hurt, never are driven out of their course by adverse winds, and always are able to see that everything is for the best, are blessed people surely in this world of troubles; but then they are very unlike the rest of us, who cry out a great deal, and are very foolish generally, not only when we are young, but all our lives.

We were about to add that few of us are able to console ourselves in sorrow by writing letters miles long, full of religious meditations, to our sympathising friends. But here we pause, feeling that we mistake. Such books as the one before us prove effectually that there are a great many people in the world, especially women, to whom the medium of letter-writing is still of immense importance, and who do manage to make their lives supportable and relieve their minds by much effusion of words, arranged into very nice sentences, and reading as if it meant a great deal—smooth, agreeable, sometimes even eloquent English, which really has very little meaning to speak of; weak circles round a weak thought—repetition over and over of some set principle of consolation—such, for instance, as that sorrow in this

life is even to be preferred to happiness for the spiritual advantage accruing from it. That there is a great deal in all this that will neither bear the test of Scripture nor of reason, it would be perhaps cruel to attempt to prove. But nothing could be more depressing than the long account of deaths and record of letters of condolence which occupy the latter part of this book. It is one of the penalties of long life to see friends dropping round like leaves in autumn, and the monotony and oppression of so much mortality afflicts the reader. In this as in some other points, the book resembles—and this is the highest praise we can give it—though in a very far off and faint degree, a book which took all France and all England by storm, Mrs. Craven's '*Récit d'une Sœur*.' It wants altogether the delightful freshness of the idyll which begins that beautiful book; but in its piety, refinement, and gentle level of fond domestic feeling, it somewhat approaches, though infinitely weaker in every way, its French original.

Here is, however, a sketch of the surroundings of the eloquent, fervent, learned, and somewhat eccentric Archdeacon Julius Hare, from the graceful pen of Dean Stanley, which will interest the reader:—

"Of all the peculiarities of English life, none perhaps is so unique as an English parsonage. But how peculiar even among English parsonages was the rectory of Hurstmonceaux. The very first glance at the entrance-hall revealed the character of its master. It was not merely a house with a good library—the whole house was a library. The vast nucleus which he (Julius Hare) brought with him from Cambridge grew year by year, till not only study and drawing-room and dining-room, but passage and antechamber and bedrooms, were overrun with the ever-advancing and crowded book-

shelves. At the time of his death it had reached the number of more than twelve thousand volumes: and it must be further remembered that these volumes were of no ordinary kind. Of all libraries which it has been our lot to traverse, we never saw any equal to this in the combined excellence of quantity and quality; none in which there were so few useless, so many valuable works. Its original basis was classical and philological; but of later years the historical, philosophical, and theological elements outgrew all the rest. The peculiarity which distinguished the collection probably from any other private or public in the kingdom was the preponderance of German literature. No work nor pamphlet of any note in the teeming catalogues of German booksellers escaped his notice; and with his knowledge of the subjects, and of the probable elucidation which they would receive from this or that quarter, they formed themselves in natural and harmonious groups around what already existed, so as to give to the library both the appearance and reality not of a mere accumulation of parts, but of an organic and self-multiplying whole. And what perhaps was yet more remarkable, was the manner in which the centre of this whole was himself. Without a catalogue, without assistance, he knew where every book was to be found, for what it was valuable, what relation it bore to the rest. The library was like a magnificent tree which he had himself planted, of which he had matured the growth, which spread its branches far and wide over his dwelling, and in the shade of which he delighted, even if he was prevented for the moment from gathering its fruits or pruning its luxuriant foliage.

"In the few spaces which this tapestry of literature left unoccupied were hung the noble pictures which he had brought with him from Italy. To him they were more than mere works of art—they were companions and guests; and they were the more remarkable from their contrast with the general plainness and simplicity of his house and furniture, so unlike the usual accompaniments of luxury and grandeur in which we should usually seek and find works of such costly beauty. In this home—now hard at work with his myriad volumes round him at his student's desk—now wan-

dering to and fro, book in hand, between the various rooms, or up and down the long garden-walks overlooking the distant Level with its shifting lights and shades—he went on, year by year, extending the range and superstructure of that vast knowledge of which the solid basis had been laid in the classical studies of his beloved university; or correcting, with an elaborate minuteness which, to the bystanders, was at times almost wearisome to behold, the long succession of proofs which, during the later years of his life, were hardly ever out of his hands.”

It is with compunction that we lay aside these volumes, so pure and pious in their gentle monotony, feeling disposed almost to beg pardon for our disapproval. Many good people no doubt will like them—many excellent persons will emulate them in public and private to the edification of some tranquil souls, but to the much weariness of the general reader. There is much in the work of family biographers which we must all sympathise with. It is a fascinating occupation to be able to show to the world how, by the conjunction of so many respectable Johns and gentle Marys, we ourselves have come to be the thorough gentle-folks we are—to be connected with all the best people in the country, and belong to the most genuinely good society: what ambition can be less reprehensible? The only drawback is that the Johns and Marys, if not remarkable in themselves, do not interest the reader as they do the writer, and insolent critics are apt to hold up their hands in wonder and ask if this is all the product of so many distinguished and well-bred generations. “A family after long ages,” says Mr. Helps, “like some slowly developing plant, produces its best flower and then dies off.” It “thinks itself out.” The danger

of books like Mr. Hare’s is that it multiplies instances of men thus thinking themselves out and dying away in a feeble monotony of intellectualism, wasted thoughtfulness, and over-culture, like the pale and spindly plants of an ill-aired conservatory. It is better to keep those pious and long self-communions, those gentle but interminable letters, in the home quiet which produced them. To bring them forth to the world is a kind of sacrilege. Their weakness ought to make them doubly sacred.

It is a strange memento to ourselves of the passage of time to recollect the days when a new poem by Mr. Tennyson made our heart beat and our ears tingle.* Is time alone and ourselves to blame that it does so no longer? that we hear of Gareth and Lynette with a calm not unmingled with discontent, and read it with still greater composure, and something between a grumble and a sigh? Partly, perhaps, the fault is ours, but partly to that of the singer, who has drawn out the lingering sweetness of his notes so long that the cadence begins to ring drearily upon our ears, and to sound like a faint echo of something we have heard before, rather than a vigorous utterance of the present. We desire to throw no scorn upon the fables of the Table Round. Such as they are, they have taken profound possession of at least all the Celtic peoples, though, oddly enough, it is the most English of poets who has given to them their most elevated and noble form. The myth of King Arthur and his chivalry is as noble a one as the imagination ever conceived; and Mr. Tennyson has treated many portions of it in a noble way. Few poems have ever been taken more

* Gareth and Lynette, &c. By Alfred Tennyson, D.C.L., Poet-Laureate. Strahan and Gudge Hill, London: 1872.

into the heart of a generation than the first Idylls of the King. They were not without faults indeed. The story of Enid might be monotonous and aimless, the story of Vivien "improper," as many people thought, and certainly disagreeable; but the milk-white visionary maiden, Elaine, and the great impassioned woman, Guinevere, were pictures to last for ever; and so was that sad and wonderful figure of Lancelot, the most perfect creation of modern poetry, and all Mr. Tennyson's own; for the Lancelot of the ancient story has little in common with that truest and falsest of knights and lovers—that wonderful impersonation of honour and dishonour, most pathetic of heroes. Most readers must have felt a certain pang of disappointment mingle with their eager anticipation when a second volume of idylls was announced to us; but when, after the "Holy Grail," there comes yet another last appearance, the pain quite predominates over the pleasure, even in anticipation. We will not say we are tired of Arthur, but we are certainly a little offended—a little grieved, and half ashamed of this oft return to the exhausted tale. Mr. Tennyson has a right, as the first of reigning poets, to have his way, and take his own course; but, loyal as we are to him, his way troubles us, and disturbs not our allegiance, but our satisfaction in it. Is this indeed the very last? or may there yet come again another and another to disturb our mind and our latest editions? We hope not. Mr. Tennyson is still too rich in vigour and power to confine himself by anything but a caprice to this well-worn field; and we trust he will listen to the whisper of remonstrance, hardly loud enough to make itself publicly heard, which is rising faintly all over England. Critics are often bold, and sometimes bitter; but there is a curious servility mixed with their daring to

authors who are above their powers. We are afraid to dissent from the universal public praise—or we are afraid to appear less gifted and able to appreciate the new great work than our fellows—or, lastly, we are afraid of reprisals, which one of the body-guard of the poet might be prompt to make. But however it is, this is certain, that few of us have boldness to say, what most people are thinking, to the most popular of poets—that one little word, enough! Though we breathe it in our neighbour's ear without hesitation, we are afraid to pronounce it boldly in the hearing of the world.

Yet it is the only word which expresses our sentiment. Enough, oh beloved poet! You cannot make another Lancelot for us. Do not, we beseech you, wear out our fond recollection, and discourage our loyal attention, by more Gareths, or even more Tristrams. After the leader, the common knights fall upon us. Let us have no more Last Tournaments or last words. The harp has other strings, and the world other storics full of poetic meaning. Create us something new out of Time and Nature—something fresh out of the unknown!

Of the two poems published in this little volume one had been already printed to the public in the pages of the 'Contemporary Review'; the other is new—if the strain can be called new which rings with such a too-familiar cadence—for, as is natural, the less the warm spring of spontaneous impulse, the more appears the bond of manner, a masked and gilded fetter sometimes too prominent even in the earlier and nobler Idylls. The story of Gareth is not, to use its own imagery, a savoury one. Nor can we see how the character of the young prince could at all be improved by his service as "kitchen knave," or by

that "smell of kitchen-grease," which is so often and so prominently brought before us—not by any means a pleasant suggestion, even in the way of abuse. The hero, who is son of Queen Bellicent, and no less, consequently, than nephew of Arthur, is allowed by his fond and foolish mother to go to Arthur's court only under condition of serving there for a year in the kitchen without disclosing his name or claiming the knighthood for which he longs—a condition which appears to be impossible, but which of course he immediately accepts. The legend, we must presume, is intended (if we could put all the old arrangements out of our mind, and fancy ourselves reading the *Idylls* for the first time, which, with all deference to Mr. Tennyson, is impossible) to come first of all the stories of the Table Round, after the introductory tale entitled the "Coming of Arthur;" and we are requested to suppose that the mind of the country is still disturbed and uncertain about the reality, not only of his mission, but of himself, and that a certain air of miracle and visionary strangeness hangs about stately Camelot and its inhabitants. At the same time, the Round Table is in all its pristine purity and fidelity, an ideal brotherhood. One of the gleams of real poetry in this tale is the approach of the hero and his attendants to the mystic city, which is full of beauty. How dewy and fresh is the breath of morning in the song as they set out:—

"The three were clad like tillers of the soil;
Southward they set their faces. The birds
made
Melody on branch and melody in mid-air.
The damp hill slopes were quickened into
green,
And the live green had kindled into
flowers.
For it was past the time of Easter day.
So when their feet were planted on the
plain

That broadened towards the base of Ca-
melot,
Far off they saw the silver-misty morn
Rolling her smoke about the Royal Mount
That rose between the forest and the field.
At times the summit of the high city
flashed;
At times the spires and turrets half-way
down
Prick'd through the mist; at times the
great gates shone
Only that opened on the field below:
Anon the whole fair city had disappeared.

Then those who went with Gareth were
amazed,
One crying, 'Let us go no further;
Lord,
Here is a city of enchanters built
By fairy beings.' The second echoed
him—
'Lord, we have heard from our wise men
at home
To northward that this king is not the
king,
But only changeling out of Fairy-land,
Who drove the heathen hence by sorcery
And Merlin's glamour.' Then the first
again—
'Lord, there is no such city anywhere,
But all a vision.'

Gareth, however, in the confidence of youth, goes on, and immediately meets a satirical old man, whose explanation comes in like an incongruous modern note in the visionary place. The "playing on him," and ironical confusion of false and true, with all its double meanings, might indeed have found place in another fashion in such a legend; but it is a great deal too like that nineteenth century art which is called "chaffing," not to be somewhat startling at the gates of Camelot. The strangers have been scared by a sudden peal of music, which makes them spring back from the gate in alarm; and concerning which Gareth questions the old man, who turns up certainly in the very nick of time:—

"Then that old Seer made answer, playing
on him
And saying, 'Son, I have seen a good
ship sail
Keel upward and mast downward in the
heavens,
And solid turrets topsy-turvy in air;
And here is truth; but, an' it please thee
not,

Take thou the truth as thou hast told it
me.
For truly, as thou sayest, a Fairy King
And Fairy Queens have built the city,
Son;
They came from out a sacred mountain-
cleft
Towards the sunrise, each with harp in
hand,
And built it to the music of their harps.
And as thou sayest, it is enchanted, Son,
For there is nothing in it, as it seems,
Saving the King; though some there be that
hold
The King a shadow, and the city real;
Yet take thou heed of him, for so thou
pass
Beneath this archway, so wilt thou be-
come
A thrall to his enchantments, for the
King
Will bind thee by such vows as is a shame
A man should not be bound by, yet the
which
No man can keep; but so thou dread to
swear,
Pass not beneath this gateway, but abide
Without among the cattle of the field,
For an ye heard a music, like enow
They are building still, seeing the city is
built
To music, therefore, never built at all,
And therefore, built forever."

Here too is a charming little bit
of description worthy of earlier
days:—

"Ever and anon a knight would pass
Outward or inward to the hall; his arms
Clashed; and the sound was good to
Gareth's ear;
And out of tower and casement shyly
gleamed
Eyes of pure women, wholesome stars of
love,
And all about a healthful people moved
As in the presence of a gracious king.

"Then into hall Gareth ascending, heard
A voice—the voice of Arthur—and beheld
Far over heads in that long-vaulted hall
The splendour of the presence of the King
Throned and delivering doom—and looked
no more
But felt his young heart hammering in his
ears
And thought, 'For this half-shadow of a
lie
The truthful King will doom me ere I
speak.'
Yet pressing on, tho' all in fear, to find
Sir Gawain or Sir Mordred, saw nor one
Nor other, but in all the listening eyes
Of those tall knights that ranged about
the throne,

Clear honour shining like the dewy star
Of dawn, and faith in this great King, with
pure
Affection, and the light of victory
And glory gained, and evermore to gain."

Perhaps we have had too much of
this early devotion and obedience;
but still the picture is finely touched.
Our patience fails, however, when
Gareth, after some discussion be-
tween the shrill Sir Kay and Lance-
lot, whose proverbial courtesy has
grown a little tedious, begins 'his
penance, and—

"All for glory underwent
The sooty yoke of kitchen vassalage."

In this position, however, he
behaves himself, we need not say
with the greatest propriety; dis-
couraging all improper talk, and
doing his duty like a gentleman.
He has just been loosed from his
foolish ordeal, and has secretly in-
formed the king of his name and
quality, and gained from him a
promise of the next "quest," when
the heroine of the story, Lynette,
an extremely impertinent and mo-
dern young woman, comes on the
scene. Her description has an un-
intentional touch of the comic in it,
which it seems almost unkind to
particularise, as it must strike every-
body. The character of Lynette is
no doubt founded upon Sir Thomas
Mallovy's Demoiselle Mal-disant, and
therefore is not without warrant in
Arthurian legend; but nothing will
persuade us that such a forward and
somewhat fast young person was
born in any but the nineteenth cen-
tury. She has a beautiful complex-
ion, made up of May-blossom and
apple-blossom, with hawk eyes, and
an impertinent little *retroussé* nose
"Tip-tilted like the petal of a
flower;" and she is naturally ex-
asperated when, having come to
seek Lancelot for a "quest" of un-
paralleled difficulty and danger, she
has the "kitchen knave" allotted
to her instead. How she holds her

"tip-tilted" nose when he approaches her; how she reproaches him with "smelling of kitchen grease," most unpleasant of accusations; how she keeps well in advance to avoid this inconvenience of his company (which, if there was any truth in it, was judicious enough, though impertinent); and how he good-humouredly puts up with it all,—we need not describe. An imaginative and able writer, in our clever contemporary the 'Spectator,' has made a great deal of the allegory of the three knights, the Morning Star, the Sun, and the Evening Star, whom Gareth encounters and overcomes in succession, before he comes to the last grand passage of arms with the mysterious personage Night or Death, who holds the Castle Perilous in terror, and insists on wedding its imprisoned lady. The ingenious critic makes a profound parable of life out of these successive conflicts, and considers the sudden unmasking of the last horror to be a representation, for the good of Arthur and his knights, as well as for ours, of the false terror of our idea of death, and of the way in which its gloom disappears when boldly faced. Here is Mr. Tennyson's account of his hero's crowning victory. We do not feel able ourselves to appreciate the subtle force of the allegory; nor do we feel anything more than the curious and unexpected shock of an anti-climax when, after very elaborate heapings up of the awe and mystery, the skull-crowned helmet, the ominous silence, of the vast dark form—

"High on a night-black horse, in night-black arms,
With white breast-bone and barren ribs
of death,"

which advances in the half-light, we find the following issue of the adventure:—

"Those that did not blink the terror saw,
'th was cast to ground and slowly

But with one stroke Sir Gareth split the
skull,
Half fell to right, and half to left, and lay;
Then with a stronger buffet he clove the
helm
As thoroughly as the skull; and out from
this
Issued the bright face of a blooming boy,
Fresh as a flower new-born, and crying,
'Knight,
Slay me not: my three brethren bade me
do it
To make a horror all about the house,
And stay the world from Lady Lyonis;
They never dreamed the passes would be
past.'
Answered Sir Gareth graciously to one
Not many a moon his younger, 'My fair
child,
What madness made thee challenge the
chief knight
Of Arthur's hall?' 'Fair sir, they bade
me do it:
They hate the king, and Lancelot, the
king's friend.
They hoped to slay him somewhere on
the stream;
They never dreamed the passes would be
past.'"

We confess that, for our own part, this transaction confuses all our ideas, both moral and æsthetic. The dark and brooding horror of death may, and we hope will, turn into something better and brighter than we can fancy, but not into anything, surely, that can be represented by the piping voice of "a blooming boy," confessing to a foolish mummery. The symbol, if it is intended for a symbol, is weak and ineffective in the extreme; and instead of coming upon us with any solemn splendour of revelation, expanding new truth, or even a worthy new incident out of the reading of the old, strikes the reader merely with a half-contemptuous disappointment and sense that he has been taken in. We do not catch our breath with the sudden excitement of the new revelation; we only ask, "Is that all?" and stare at the bewildering page with a puzzled consciousness of the anti-climax. The parable is too artificial and overstrained to suggest itself to a simple mind at all; and we ac-

cept, on the suggestion of the critic, the fact that it is a parable, merely because otherwise it is absolutely destitute of any meaning whatsoever.

The Last Tournament seems to us to show a broader handling, and more of the ancient force, but of it the reader has already made his judgment. That both are full of fragments of beautiful poetry is implied in the mere name of the poet. But he has scarcely done wisely in dealing with the world as the wise master of the feast recommended. The policy of giving us the worst when we have well drunken does not hold in literature, where it is better for every kind of singer to hold if he can by an ascending, not descending scale.

We were so unfortunate last year as to call forth an angry protest from the author of 'A Daughter of Heth,' against certain words we employed in commending his book. We wonder will that gentleman be angry now if we venture to say that a work just published, and entitled 'The Strange Adventures of a Phaeton,'* is a charming book, full of beautiful scenery, and just such a bright and pleasant thread of story as beguiles the reader on? Never mind. Fortunately we work not for individuals, but the public, and this novel, though it is scarcely a novel, is of a kind completely adapted to Mr. Black's genius—a most happy inspiration. The journey made by the Phaeton is from London to Edinburgh, through many villages and towns which have fallen out of knowledge of travellers; and from the silvery reaches of the Thames to the moors and burns of the Border, there occur landscapes enough to make a picture-gallery well worth having to refresh one's mind with in stormy days. The

party thus travelling carries with it, too, a romance—a delightful young lady with a guitar (the only thing we object to, for what has the twangling of that outlandish instrument to do with such a strain as "Beyond yon hills where Lugar flows"?) and an equally delightful young lover, who is characteristically, but not fatiguingly, German. How this romance flows on along the pleasant road, through all the summer sights and sounds, with comments upon everything that comes across the travellers' path, and all manner of amusing discussions and disquisitions, the reader must find out in the book itself. There is even room for complications, for an unhappy rival, and a considerable amount of that uncertainty which is so dear to the novelist, and everything comes to a delightful conclusion—a conclusion shrined in such a picture of our beautiful Edinburgh as would suffice, if there was nothing else, to excite the patriotic Scot into approval. But no such bribe is necessary. The book is a really novel one; which is of all recommendation perhaps the greatest in this *blasé* age. We should not wonder if it set other travellers in motion to re-discover England and Scotland—countries which have dropped out of the knowledge of tourists—and, at all events, there could be no better way of lightening up these November days than by mounting, in imagination, into Mr. Black's phaeton, watching the pleasant loves of Bell and her Uhlan, and seeing fair valleys and soft hills and many a brilliant and tranquil summer sky glide by us in our progress. We can recommend no more agreeable pastime to the winter reader who finds November dreary, and the afternoon of the year lingering and slow.

* The Strange Adventures of a Phaeton. By William Black. 2 vols. Macmillan & Co., London: 1872.

THE STRIKE AND THE LOCK-OUT.

THIS is to be an essay after the obsolete much-abused fashion. According to that fashion, it is to be divided into parts; but they shall be restricted to three in number. The first shall relate to the way in which certain persons ought to act; the second to the way in which they will act, whether they ought or not; and the third to the way in which they should be compelled to act, whether they will or not.

Such an arrangement seems necessary, because we have economic philosophers in our day who think they have done all that is necessary for putting an end to evil practices when they prove these to be on the whole unprofitable to the community at large, however much they may increase the gains or indulge the passions of those who perpetrate them. Surely it has been proved to saturation—who for a moment doubts it?—that strikes, restrictions on the periods of labour, and all checks on the efforts of the individual workman to increase his productive power, cause a dead loss of value to the world at large. But what is that empty theory to the practical consideration of the man who is to get for the current week thirty shillings instead of the five-and-twenty he would get in an open market? Nay, what is it to him if you strive to convince him that in a month or two the evil he is doing will come to his own door? He doesn't believe you; rather, he doesn't realise your idea. The present is all to him—the present realised in beef, beer, and tobacco. And in truth he here exemplifies, only in a coarser or narrower sense, an impulse that more or less pervades all mankind. There is but one set of

men who, as an entire class, look far into the future, even on their own account. These are the systematic accumulators of money—those smitten with the passion which, as Byron says, never cloy; for with them the future in all its glories is represented in the daily present—the ceaseless addition to the gathering store. Of course there are exceptions in far-seeing and far-planning men, but with the general run of us the eye is for the present, even in our own concerns. And as to those of mankind in the future—true, we are just now saving our coals; but of all that the thrifty housewives of our land shall rescue from devouring flames and thriftless cooks, how many hundreds weight will be preserved in answer to the eloquent appeal recently made to us, to save our successors of four hundred years hence from being frozen to death?

But to come back to the original point: it is a fact only too well known that to a large class of workmen who have become familiar with the machinery of the union and the strike, a belief in that machinery is a sort of religion. But it is also true, though it is less obvious, and has had too little account, that there are other classes of men who work, so little liable to the same influences, that they may perhaps be astonished to find the question of their liability to them put even by way of supposition, and for the purpose of analogy. These are the classes whose work lies in art, science, and general literature. We are apt to classify the one set as hand-workers, and the other as brain-workers; but the boundary between them is far from distinct. Many of the intellectual workmen

take aid, and in some instances precious aid, from the hand. On the other part, all the hand-workmen are not, we hope, destitute of brains, or entirely exempt from the necessity of using them. Some people, indeed, have gone too near to such a supposition, not without encouragement from the class on whom they have cast the imputation, as we shall presently see.

Let us take art first, since the hand has a large share in its triumphs. Suppose there is a combination that shall prohibit a Reynolds or a Wilkie from realising any larger income than the veriest dauber that consents to call himself artist for the sake of the money and privileges to be obtained by an equal participation in the rewards of art, good and bad—for an equal participation it is if a certain limited number are to take up a special vocation, and none is to make more or less by it than the others. Suppose, further, that in any school or society of artists—say of painters—it is less the work of the members to paint pictures than to organise restraints on painting, and to go forth at the order of their superiors to give force to these restraints. Suppose that, in defiance of the combination among the blockheads, some man of genius, who will not submit to be ruled by them, paints a great picture, and lays it before the world for such

reward of praise or emolument as it may secure for him—here is mutiny, to be immediately punished by the proper authority. The artist is followed and hustled in the streets; his wife and children are insulted; rattaning begins; his studio windows are broken; his brushes are thrown in the gutter; his great work is cut to pieces. If all this will not check him in his rebellious career, stronger measures are in store.*

In contemplating the application of the same system to literature, we have come alarmingly close to our own door. When our public has received with delight, and laid down with expectation of future enjoyment, the first chapter of a novel from some gifted pen, we receive notice that the author is an "unfair man," or a "knob-stick," or "a dung," that we must abandon his genius, otherwise our "fair," or "honourable," or "lawful" contributors will be "drawn out." This of course presupposes an attempt to keep terms with the dictators—an attempt such as employers in the sphere they now command are ever trying, and ever at the cost of sacrifice after sacrifice, until the reaction comes. The Union would of course supply the editor, as well as the contributors. It would supply also all who are authorised, either on their own account or in bargains

* We may find in the archives of existing trades-unionism a precedent for the first courteous steps in dealing with a rebel in the matter of painting in the following manifesto:—"Messrs. Worthington and Challoner: SIRS,—It having been brought before the meeting on Monday night that your book-keeper had been doing some writing or painting, you are requested not to let him, he not being a painter. By doing so you will oblige yours respectfully—The COMMITTEE Blackpool Operative House Painters' Association." Certified under their common seal. The *dignus vindice nodus* is thus described: "Among their clerks, or perhaps their only clerk, is a man who was brought up as a painter, or writer, as it is called—that is, a painter who does the lettering that is required on signs, and so on; but of course, during the time that he was acting as clerk, he had not any occasion to exercise the calling to which he had been brought up. He was a non-union man, and one day when he wanted to measure up some work he found that the rods with which he usually measured were worn out, and consequently he took a little paint, and painted the figures of the feet and inches upon this rod."—*Trades Union Commission*, Q. 2968.

with publishers, to supply the world with new poetry, philosophy, science, and history. The great traveller in Africa or the Rocky Mountains would require to qualify by membership before he could tell to the world his adventures and discoveries; and if these gave him a claim to some better reward from the world than it would choose to confer on the intellectual descendants of the old Grub Street crew, who dwell at home at ease, yet that reward must not be accepted. "A fair day's wages for a fair day's work," all round the circle, of science and literature as of mechanical labour. In the region of divinity, by the way, there would be a new conflict between the spiritual and the temporal powers, leading to such entanglements as it would fatigue the mind as yet to anticipate. Well, then, the question is—would the world at large take benefit by such an arrangement? And yet it could be shown, as in other instances, that there are people who would benefit by it. The thirst for fame—the desire to rear some noble monument of intellectual power—the very love of intellectual exertion for its own sake, would prompt men to do something for literature and art—some-

thing that would bring value, though not for themselves. The dunces would reap the profit: therefore the dunces would approve of the whole arrangement, and carry it into effect by rattaning, throwing vitriol, and other like forms of process, if they had their way.*

If any one should hold that such a comparison is derogatory to the dignity of the mighty masters of intellect, are there not others who find all the dignity on the other side? How often have we been required, as the Persians would say, to lift the hat of reverence from the head of humility, and bow down before not merely the dignity, but the grandeur, the majesty, the sublimity of labour! We have heard all this said, but where is it to be found? Let us see. It is not exactly in the position and duties of the workman as a separate and individual entity. The shoemaker at his stall, though he may serve the purpose of a Teniers or Ostade, is not specifically dignified, nor is the tailor, enthroned on his bench, however nearly he may resemble a Chinese bonza. But it is not intended that we should find the sublimity in the individual; we must look for it in the aggregate.

* Since this Essay was begun, an incident shows a practical step in the direction imagined in the text. A body of compositors having announced a strike, have given orders to the readers to follow them out—on the principle, perhaps, on which the footman and the butler have to remove along with their master. The readers are assistant editors. It is their duty to see that the printing is correct according to the "copy" furnished. They are men of education, generally good linguists, and, whether or not it is their duty, it is their practice to correct the blunders of authors. Many an eminent man has escaped critical castigation through their friendly services. Fortunately for the nerves of authors it is seldom their fate to behold their divine work in type before it has passed through the revision of "the reader." Indeed the simple tribe of authors know not how feeble they are—how dependent on the assistance and mercy of those whose dealing with their work appears to be purely mechanical. If they knew what they sometimes owe to the compositor's marvellous gifts of deciphering visible signs worse than hieroglyphics, they would the more regret the restraints on his free agency. It should be noted too that the compositor possesses a terrible power which he is too magnanimous to use save on rare occasions. By such a mere change of one small letter as may at first pass unobserved, he may stab and annihilate the most ambitious climax. As for instance in that grand burst of eloquence that was to end in proving "drunkenness to be folly," but, by the change of a letter, only announced, what everybody knew before, that drunkenness was "jolly."

And when we do look for it there, and take with us the theories and inductions of those who speak about it, shall we not find that the whole sublimity consists in the existence of a dead-level mass of inert humanity, stolidly impeding all improvement from the intellectual prowess of the inventor, and as stolidly resisting any effort by the millions within it to reach up to any higher level, such as the gifts of God imparted to their nature might in a state of freedom have enabled them to reach? It reminds us of De Quincey's sense of a mysterious grandeur in the Oriental castes. There they were—the same men doing the same things for countless ages, until we go back into the absolute darkness of time. The Egyptian, the Assyrian, the Alexandrian Empires, had all passed over. There had come the conquests and the fall of Rome, the Popedom and the Reformation, the feudal organisations and the democratic convulsions that shook them to pieces. Through all these mighty shiftings and revolutions of the succeeding centuries the castes remained calm in their social level, unbroken and unruffled by each successive tempest. To the man of mystic and sublime dreams it was a relief from the busy world of energy and competition at work around him to contemplate afar off under the hot eastern sun the vast areas of population that had thus preserved in living models a social system mysteriously founded, no one could tell how many thousand years ago.

If we are to look for a really sublime conclusion to the practical efforts of the selfish men who combine to limit the efforts of their fellow-workmen, and to the projects of the philosophers who cheer them on, this would be the type of their sublimity, could they reach it. But it is impossible among men with the

Teutonic blood of the old Norsemen in their veins; and like all efforts to put chains on nature it reaches just the stage it has reached—that of depressing and demoralising a small portion of the community, and disturbing and troubling all the rest of it. There is, to our humble notion, an element both of dignity and happiness that is barbarously and cruelly displaced by the whole of this combination and strike work. It lies in the interest taken by the workman in the work of his hands. Among those who live by other work, or do not require to work for bread—whoever has taken some mechanical pursuit for his recreation—and there are, we hope, many such—has found a curious inexplicable pleasure in the gradual progress of the object of his handiwork out of mere chaos into some form of ornament or usefulness. Perhaps of all the fountains of enjoyment open to the human being, the fullest and the strongest is that of work or labour when it is done with heart and interest. But for its full enjoyment, as well as for the ample results which a wise Providence has destined that enjoyment to further, there must be freedom—freedom for the workman to act in the employment of such faculties as nature has endowed him with.

There are many influences at work in the present day, besides the perversity of the workers themselves, tending to restrain the individual genius of the hand-worker. One feels this in passing from our machinery and trades-union world and wandering through the streets of Old Nuremberg. It is essentially a creation of the mechanics of old, when it was said, "Nuremberg's hand is in every land." But it is a creation in which the artist also partakes; and one cannot help taking it as a lesson from that great assemblage of ingenious and graceful

works of the hand, that you cannot draw the absolute line between what the mind has done and what the hand. Look at the figure of the illustrious mechanic, Adam Kraft. There he is, bending down hard at work, his hammer in his hand—a thorough workman, and the worthy rival of another workman of the same town, Albert Dürer. In the multitudinous little world of stone and wood carving and decorated metal-work strewn around, how many a heart has arrived at something like the achievements of the great masters, how many a one has worked out its own original ideas, —not so ambitious, perhaps, but still its own, and pleasant to realise! And how full and hearty has been the enjoyment of these hundreds of workmen as each looked at the work of his hands, and saw that it was good? To our eyes there is more dignity in this than in the irritating diplomacy and warfare that adjusts the tailors' log or the colliers' darg, or even than there is in picketing and rattening.

In these days but a small portion of the decorations that gladden our abodes come fresh from the hands of the skilled or artistic mechanic. The pure artist invents, and the fruit of his intellect is realised by printing or casting. There are some who feel that art multiplied by machinery is no more a substitute for the influence and enjoyment of the artist's own work, than a Dutch garden with its clipped hedges and pyramids of squared holly is for the free forest. No doubt, meritorious efforts have been recently made to give harmony and symmetry to the forms of common things, especially in earthenware, yet these come to us in the produce of the machine. Carved woodwork and pattern painting are rarely seen in new houses—cast mouldings and paper-hangings show so much more for the money.

We say all this without a thought of undervaluing the scattering of graceful forms wide among the people by the agency of machinery. In this, and in the more important sphere of supplying the comforts and necessities of life, the services of the inventors of machinery can only be looked at in the spirit of laudation and thankfulness; but we might have the other also. And now the reference to machinery brings us back to our original object, by reminding us that Unionism with its coercions and intimidations has done one good service at least: it has stimulated the invention of machinery. It is said that the friends of the Unions are no friends to machinery. It may be so or may not; it matters not. The days are past when it was a matter of doubt, even with men of cultivated minds, whether every new machine was not a substantial injury to the human race by depriving so many human beings of the means of living. We now know that machinery not only increases the comforts of the poor by cheapening commodities, but that it also increases the fund spent on productive labour. But to the point. Nothing has given a stronger stimulus to inventions for dispensing with hand-labour than the unreasonable demands and tyrannic conduct of those who happened to be the monopolists of some department of hand workmanship.

People who took an interest in social matters some quarter of a century ago will remember the terrible wail of the handloom weavers. There they were, not far from a million in number, working seventy hours a-week to earn seven shillings—sometimes only five. A commission of inquiry, creating great interest in its day, reported on their condition, its cause, and its possible remedies. Though uttered in that proverbial embodiment of pomp

and dreariness—a “blue book”—the report of the handloom weavers’ commission told the world tales more touching than the most gifted of popular novelists have ever told. In the squalid abodes of these pauper labourers they saw occasionally relics of a better day tenaciously preserved through years of misery. And the poor creatures had indeed seen a better day—a day only too good to last. How it brightened and was extinguished is a simple story. In the production of the textile fabrics the triumphs of machinery began with the spinning part, under the command of Arkwright, Hargrave, and Crompton. Cheap yarn poured into the market, but to be available in cheapening cloth it had to be woven, and machinery had not yet invaded this realm of industry. There was, as it were, a gulf with no bridge across it, and the handloom weavers had the privilege of taking the abounding commodity across. Of necessity they were highly paid. Many of them lived like small gentlefolks, and indeed it were desirable that there were more ambition than there is among the working people of the present day so to live, and to have the means of so living on a surer foundation—that of productive skill—for it is to be noted that when the worker makes his money by skill and energy, and not by an accidental or forced monopoly in some easy work, accomplished without thought or effort, like that of weaving, he is more capable of adapting himself to revolutions in the labour market—more capable of turning his hands to some new method of working. As to the handloom weavers, poor souls! Watt’s great invention of the steam-engine was waiting to grasp their easy trade whenever the inventor’s ingenuity should make an iron weaver to convert the thread into

cloth. The powerloom came, and no human philosophy or influence could enable the hand of man to compete with it. The handloom weaver, if he could turn to nothing else—and seldom had he the heart or the capacity to do so—was doomed to ir retrievable ruin. Charity might give him bread—industry never.

There is still another lesson from this branch of manufacture. In the year 1838 five cotton-spinners were put on trial for murder. A poor man—a “knob-stick,” as he was technically called in the phraseology of the Union—had been tempted by the needs of a starving family to work in defiance of a proclamation of strike. One Saturday night, when he was on the streets with his wife, laying in the provisions for the week out of his wages, he was shot dead. That the murder was committed by order of the Union, no human creature doubted. The actual deed, however, could not be brought home to one of the accused, and the Crown had to be content with a conviction against them of combination for the purposes of threatening and assaulting men lawfully attempting to earn a living, and they were sentenced to transportation. The monopoly for which the community of cotton-spinners in Glasgow dipped their hands in blood was that of moving “the wheels” or the “mule-jenny.” The spindles were placed in this, and were moved outwards to increase the fineness of the thread, and again inwards to let it wind on the spindles. An operation so simple, and so desperately protected as a monopoly, called aloud for the intervention of machinery. It came to the rescue in the shape of the self-acting mule, and with this a boy or a girl can accomplish what it took the work or at least the time of three or four men to do. Thus came to an end the tyranny of the terrible cotton-spinner.

In one industry after another, machinery is knocking at the door of the self-constituted monopolist. It has reached down even to the depths and difficulties of the coal-hewer's dingy labours, though it has not yet been established as a systematic arrangement of the mine. It is certain soon to take possession of the art of squaring and hewing building-stone. It has invaded the dominion of the iron-puddler, and threatens to supersede him. His title has not a dignified sound, but he is a mighty Vulcan, and has exercised in his day a terrible power. The manufacture of iron has many stages, and those who can command any one of these are masters of the situation. We remember the rather startled interest of a polite group on one of their number reading—with a slightly mischievous intonation—a newspaper announcement to the effect that "during the week pigs had become lively and several of the damped furnaces had been blasted." Now the damping or putting out of one iron furnace, and its blasting or restoration to activity, is a matter of the supporting of four or five hundred people, when we make allowance for the families of the workers. Taking the iron manufacture from its beginning, in the extraction of the iron itself from the earth, and of the coal that is to roast and smelt it, down to its delivery in completed rails or bars, gives, or lately gave, employment to about a hundred men for the quantity passing through one furnace. The ore being first roasted in a smouldering fire to extract the gases, is never permitted to cool until it becomes a finished commodity. From the roasting kiln it passes into the furnace, and is thence put into the hands of the "puddler," who transfers it to the "shingler." We do not know how it may be exactly at this moment, for machinery is working its way into the

operation, but the puddler and the shingler used to make their £1 a-day when they chose to work for it. No doubt it was hard and damaging work, but it suited a reckless class of men, whose rule of existence was "a short life and a merry," and who had abundant idle time and plenty of money for dissipation. The puddler's duty is that of raking up the purified iron from the lowest depths of the furnace, twisting the molten matter round and round on his rake until it becomes a great hot ball called a "bloom;" and this is conveyed to the shingler to be passed through the rolling mills. When you saw a small group of these men at their infernal-looking work, you saw also those who had it in their power by a strike to extinguish some half-dozen furnaces, each with its hundred families dependent on it for bread. By "Brown's bloom squeezers," and other machines, the amount of human work necessary to this process has been much reduced, and it is now said that the whole operation is to pass from the hands of the special adepts to those of the working engineer, whose hand is alike at home where the ultimate object is to paddle a ship, drive a carriage, or work a mill. His class too may combine, and often do so, but they have not the formidable power of those who can command the passage of a great manufacture from one necessary stage to another.

A stimulus to invention is one of several forms of reaction by which trades-unionists have defeated their own objects. Another is by driving capital and trade out of a district or country—as witness the great ship-building business established at Blackwall, and ruined because the workers demanded nine shillings a-day, and the trade could not afford them that, so that they were cast adrift to lead a half mendicant

life, and brood in veritable sack-cloth and ashes over their folly. The time for a successful blow—for hitting the bloated capitalist “between wind and water,” as sailors say—is when he is in the crisis of completing a great contract, and the continuing or the stopping of his work is the question of going on to fortune or into the ‘Gazette.’ But the judiciously timed strike sometimes brings down all together, employers and employed. The late Sir Archibald Alison, who, as the chief magistrate of Lanarkshire, saw a great deal of the working of strikes and of their results, gives some instances of this kind, in an article on “Trades Unions and Strikes.” * In an extensive print-field in Glasgow, a strike had been so well timed as to be eminently successful—it made the company bankrupt, sending two thousand “hands” adrift at the will of a few whose functions were necessary to keep the rest at work (and who consequently felt and exercised their power). Sir Archibald goes on to say of the great body of sufferers thus: “They immediately made the most piteous complaints to the magistrates of the county, who, however, had no public funds out of which to afford them any relief; and the helpless multitude were in a great part thrown upon the parish funds, or reduced to the utmost despair by the consequence of their own acts; while the print-fields in their quarter were totally destroyed, and that thriving branch of trade altogether extinguished. Some of the ringleaders convicted of rioting, and breaking into the mills, in order to intimidate the new hands during this strike, were apprehended and brought to trial in the winter assizes at Glasgow in January 1835. The principal pleaded guilty, and was sentenced

to eighteen months’ confinement in Bridewell. When liberated from prison, he found the print-fields in which he had been earning from thirty to thirty-five shillings a-week deserted, and the buildings shut up or in ruins. By faithfully following up the directions of ‘The Liberator’ [the name of a Glasgow newspaper of the period], and timing the strike at the moment when heavy bills were running against their employers, the workmen had succeeded in rendering them bankrupt, and destroying the great and thriving manufactory which they had set on foot. The consequence was that this ringleader found himself without employment; his furniture and effects were sold off by his landlord for rent, and he is at this moment, when burdened with a wife and eight children, breaking stones upon the public road for eight shillings a-week.”

Time rolls over and hides such stories in thousands or in millions when they occur among ordinary people, even in that majestic body reverently referred to by public orators as “the working-classes.” It is seldom, except when it touches princes or high patricians, that the misery of fighting for the sordid demands of existence—fighting against hunger and cold—is recorded in the rolling periods of the historian. But no one who has read the newspapers during an ordinary lifetime can doubt that the victims of “the strike,” and its reactionary effect, “the lock-out,” would hold a large share in the total of the calamities and miseries of mankind. The wife and the children—it is upon them that penury and starvation do their worst, and theirs are especially “the short and humble annals of the poor.”

Let us note a few of the minor evils caused by meddling with free

* ‘Edinburgh Review’ for April 1838.

trade in labour, and then we have done with this part of our essay—the part that refers to what workmen should do, but won't. That people are not free to use the services of the good workman in preference to those of the bad is a direct loss to the community, and if the employer may not select the most skilful and suitable "hand," the loss falls on the public, sometimes spoken of as "the consumer." In many trades the employer may not select the most promising to his purpose of the men available, and he must take those who are put forward in rotation by their masters, the union committee. The stupid, who are the majority almost everywhere, and will be the successful parties where majorities settle the questions that each man should settle for himself—the stupid, we say, will always be the gainers by this organisation. As Sir Archibald remarks :—

"If the barristers could introduce such a system, and compel a sutor, who had been lucky enough to secure the Attorney-General or Sir William Follett for a case, to put up with the first who stood for employment, though only just called to the bar, for the next, it is quite evident that, whatever the serjeants or those at the head of the profession might say, those in the middle or at the bottom would be very great gainers. Nothing can be clearer in this than that it always will be the interest of every numerical majority in every skilled trade to compel their employers to take them in rotation, because the inferior workmen are at all times more numerous than the best class; and it will always be found almost impossible to get the majority to abandon a system which gives to numerous mediocrity the rewards which ought to belong to rare ability."—P. 319.

Another cost of the interference with trade is the expense of supporting the machinery of coercion. It is the *imperium in imperio*—a

government within a government. The workman receives orders from a chief who is not known to him, and has to pay sums of money for the salaries of officers whose names and duties are concealed from him. When the trial of the Glasgow cotton-spinners dragged forth many of the secrets of the organisation, it was found that in eight months a sum in round numbers of twelve thousand pounds had been spent. Part was in subsidising the press, part in thinning the ranks of the trade by paying £10 to each man who would emigrate, and under general expenses, so much was paid for acts of violence. It is a further loss that much time is drawn from the exercise of the workman's trade to meetings and communings. Before the passing of the last Reform Act, it might have been said that in these assemblages the workman gratified the impulse natural to the inhabitants of a free country to transact collectively some portion of the public business. They were excluded from the Parliamentary franchise, and therefore they created parliaments and constituencies of their own. That apology for the waster of time exists no longer. The workman either has the franchise, or by diligence and respectability of conduct he may obtain it. If we then presume that he takes the average interest taken by other citizens of the empire in parliamentary or in municipal politics, he who least of all can spare time for such work has his trade's politics in addition demanding his attention.

Perhaps the reader will think it is all too clear to require so much demonstration that the community—the consumers at large—are losers by the restrictions set by workmen on themselves; and they may ask whether by any such demonstration we expect to influence workmen to

abandon the system. Our answer is, certainly not. No reasoning in the world will induce them to do so, and far too many words have already been wasted in the attempt to influence them. Let us confess that they are entitled to extract from the consumer every penny they can get. High-paid work is one of the best signs of a general prosperity in which nearly all participate. There is no fear that, because the man who works with his hands is well paid and lives in abundance, there will be no use for workers of other kinds, as if the fund afloat for the support of production and exertion were limited, like the supplies of a ship on a long voyage. To those who remember so painful a year as 1841, when the roads were populous with men out of work, the experience of many prosperous years has been an eminently satisfactory and pleasurable contrast. To one class only has the change been fatal — those who lived by representing “the distressed workman,” and who were better able than the real objects of compassion to extract for their own use the funds intended for him. The unionists say that they have made the working classes wealthy. Other people say that the continued and rapid increase of trade through a course of years has made the workman wealthy in spite of the unions. It is not worth while working out the question, since it is not our intention to endeavour to persuade the unionist that he is in the wrong. Our object, as will presently be seen, is to foster this impression in another quarter. As to the workman, we admit his right to obtain all he can get—we wish this right were better acknowledged by his fellow-workman. If he refuse to work altogether, unless on certain terms, let him—it is part of his freedom as a free Briton. If he can get others to join him, let them all stand out

against working on terms reasonable or unreasonable, and let them give no better account of their conduct than Shylock’s, that it is their humour. If their employer is at the moment completing some heavy contracts, and the stoppage will throw him into the ‘Gazette,’ what of that? “*A la guerre comme à la guerre*”—it would be as unreasonable to expect them to miss their opportunity as to expect a general to miss his opportunity when his enemy passes him on a long flank march, and a judicious charge is annihilation to him. Neither is it reasonable to suppose that a strike should be relinquished by those who are masters of the position, because a host of poorer workers will be cast idle, and will starve with their families; such miseries are but the natural incidents of warfare, as the expressive etchings of Calot show us.

And, in fact, let us confess that the morality of such a policy is not peculiar to workmen, though their actions in pursuit of it have a certain rudeness and harshness. There is something in gregarious action that wonderfully reconciles people to acts grossly unreasonable or unjust. When supported by a public opinion of its own, that which in the solitary doer of it is counted a crime becomes a policy. So did the robber chiefs who had their castles on the Rhine, the Barbary pirates, and our own Highland and Border riever. If you asked them how they lived, they would never admit that it was by theft or robbery—they were leviers of tribute. All owners of great monopolies have had the same position; they were acting with gross injustice, yet their conduct has been supported not only by their own special public opinion, but occasionally by the legislature. Look at the railway system of the present day. Put it to any astute director that a course of

action will be a great boon to the public, though it may not favour dividends, and he will count you a lunatic. If there are two competing lines, do not the public get a bargain through the greed of their rival owners which would be asked in vain from their public spirit? The other day when tramways came in to compete with short lines, the directors of these were suddenly seized with conscientious suspicions that they had not duly served the public, and so immediately took to that previously neglected duty.

We recommend that there be an end of preaching to the trades-unionists—it is of no use. To tell them that they don't raise the amount of their wages by combining is to tell them what they know to be untrue. They raise them for the time as absolutely as the man who abstracts your purse enriches himself for the time. You tell the unionist that he is doing a mischief to trade generally—what is that to him? You tell him further that in the end his conduct will react upon himself, and you cite the cases where men have so combined as to ruin or drive away a lucrative trade, and so have been run adrift—all this is an infinite way beyond his philosophy, which deals with the immediate weekly or monthly pay-day, and with that only.

Nor will it influence him to the faintest extent to remind him that his own is the class most liable to suffer by the enhancement of the price of commodities through enforced idleness, and the other grievances caused by their arrangements. The greater the expenditure of a household, the smaller is the proportion of it expended on the produce of hand work. In the library worth ten thousand pounds, where the average value of each volume is five guineas, there will not be more of the work of the paper-maker and

the printer than in a library worth five shillings a volume, and there will be no more addition made by their enforced idleness or other interruptions to the price of the article. The collector adding to his gallery of paintings a work of a master at a cost of a thousand pounds, is taxed in this way in nothing but the price of varnish and of paint at the utmost, if he is taxed upon anything tangible. If a family spending five thousand a-year is now paying fifty pounds a-year additional for coals, they do not feel it, or even know it—it falls in among the other trifles: a casual decrease of expenditure on horses, dogs, or furniture will balance it ten times over. But in the poor man's abode, an increase of five pounds on the same necessary of life is a serious calamity.

And here naturally we might expect the question to be put—To whom then is this lecture addressed, if not to those whose practices are censured by it? Well, it would be difficult to say who is addressed beyond that abstract person, "The general reader," without naming a special class not easily defined. These are persons with a deal of goodness, and a deal of vagueness of thought about formulas so specific as those of supply and demand. They are accustomed to look with a pitiful sympathy on the "working classes" as people whose families are to get coals and blankets at Christmas. They have a general notion that laws about compelling the observance of contracts, and giving the established notice before quitting their work, should not be enforced by rich men against persons so poor and helpless. They have a general impression that a great deal may be said on both sides, and that surely it is hard that the working classes should not be entitled to gain a little something to

themselves by these unions and the like, when we see the large gains made by the capitalist employers. But some among them have theories and projects of a more practical kind, and on these we have a word to say.

One project largely accepted is the establishment of a system of arbitration between employers and workmen. Let us here, by the way, protest against the phraseology in general use of "masters and servants,"—we do not think this a courteous nomenclature. But to the question of Arbitration. It would be difficult, in our notion, to find a more preposterous remedy for the difficulty. To apply it so would be a mistake about the fundamental object of arbitration. When there is a question between two people as to the terms of a bargain already made between them, one stating one version of it, the other stating another version, of course more favourable to himself, then the two go to arbiters, who are to examine the matter, and decide what in their opinion the real meaning of the bargain is. But who will go to an arbiter to decide for him whether he is to enter on a bargain? or if he intends to offer terms for a bargain, to dictate what those terms shall be? If a workman can get his thirty-five shillings a-week, will he give a patient hearing to the arbiter who finds that it is fair in all the circumstances of the case, and is his duty, to accept of thirty shillings? Would it not be a gross tyranny to create a law which should bind the workman to such a disposal of his labour? But of course in the dreams of those who suggest it the employer only is in the wrong, and is to be corrected. The arrangement is to settle the war between capital and labour by allowing the workman an equitable share in the profits of capital.

This project is something more absurd than the old usury law which prohibited the taking of more than five per cent for money, however perilous its security, and so drove it off into other investments. Then there would not be a fixed law warning the capitalist precisely as to what he had to expect, but he would be in the hands of some twaddling philosopher with a transcendent conceit, and an unhesitating reliance on the abstract justice of his own hobbies. In fact, however, the philosopher would be offering the workman a boon he could not fulfil. By the absolute laws of trade and exchange, the profit of capital belongs to it as certainly as the fruit grows on its own special tree. You may confiscate the profit in some one instance, and then the capital takes flight. You may also confiscate or destroy the capital itself, or you may probably lock it up. If fifty thousand pounds are spent in erecting a spinning-mill, and it is burnt down "by order of the committee," there is so much capital destroyed. If nobody is permitted to work in the building without getting more remuneration than the concern can afford, then it is shut, and the capital is locked up. When a share in the profits is claimed by the workman, it seems never to be remembered that if he is put in the same position as the owner, he should bear his share in the loss. In an average profit year by year of five per cent beyond the interest of money—and that is a very large and unusual profit—there will be years when there is a loss of ten or perhaps twenty per cent. How is the workman to meet that? He cannot, unless he has saved something out of his wages; and then he possesses a capital of his own, and will easily get an investment for it—if in the establishment where he works, so much the better.

There cannot be a delusion more false than that mischievous one, that capital and labour are at enmity with each other. Sweep away all the capital in the British empire to-morrow—what would become of all “the children of toil,” as our stump orators call them? The fact is, that capital and labour work together, and cannot do otherwise. If we were to express their union invidiously, we would say they both combine together against the consumer. If he can get his article sold at a profit, it is all one to the capitalist how much of the price of producing it goes in wages of labour. If he has laid out a thousand pounds, and realises by his sales eleven hundred, what matters it to him how much of that thousand pounds has been expended in wages, as separate from raw material, carriage, agency, rent of premises, and other expenses? At this moment, through some inexplicable influence, the tribe of colliers have been induced to work half time, or thereabouts. The coal owner must therefore, to give him profit on the capital laid out in plant and work, charge double price for the diminished produce. When he is charged with greed and cruelty for doing so, he asks cynically to be shown what other seller of produce conducts business at a loss, or sells his commodity below the market value, or the price he can get for it? The working collier is not materially better than he was before he restricted his work. His wife says that every necessary of life is dearer—we all know why, if she does not; and she complains that her husband, having more idle time on his hands than of old, finds it needful, or desirable, to spend more of his wages at the ale-house. It is not the first occasion when the perplexed housewife has found her “hearth-stone desolate, and round its once warm precincts coldly lying the ashes,” &c.

There is almost a precise rehearsal of the coal crisis in the instructive paper, by Sir Archibald Alison, already quoted. He gives this account of a combination in 1834, which embraced all the colliers in the counties of Lanark, Renfrew, and Stirling, amounting to many thousands.

“This combination made such good use of their effective organisation, and of the rise in the price of iron, and the general activity and prosperity of trade and manufactures which distinguished the latter six months of 1835, and the whole of 1836, that they contrived to raise their wages, as already mentioned, to the extravagant height of thirty-five shillings a-week for three days work, at four or five hours a-day only. It may easily be imagined what effect this extraordinary reduction in the produce of the coal-mines, by the labour of the colliers being limited to twelve hours a-week, must have made. The consequence was, that between this extraordinary diminution in the hours of labour, and the increasing demand for iron and every species of manufacture, the price of coals *doubled* in the beginning of 1836. In 1835 the price was from 7s. 6d. to 8s. 6d. a ton; but in February 1836 they rose rapidly to sixteen or seventeen shillings a-ton, and continued at that price for about eighteen months—viz., till October 1837, when, in consequence of the strike just mentioned having given way, they fell to 13s. a-ton. During all this period, though the demand for coals was so great, the colliers worked only for about fifteen hours a-week; and it will readily be believed, that neither the coal proprietors nor the coal masters were in any hurry, or at all anxious, to put a stop to a state of things which, at so small a consumption of the material on which they depended, brought in such prices.”

We see in these instances that, throughout all the confusion of the conditions—the colliers paid unnaturally enhanced wages for the work they do, and the consumers paying an unnaturally enhanced price for their fuel—the only party retaining

steadily through all the confusion his original position and original gains, is the capitalist. The price laid on the consumer is the place where the dead loss lies. If the worker gains anything, it is a little useless, and probably tiresome and ill-spent, idleness. To deprive capital of its natural fruit, its profits, has indeed been the great object, and the mighty ambition of the host of intellects, many of them of a high calibre, which have wasted themselves in the attempt to invent artificial or communistic systems to supersede the natural laws of trade and social order. But though they have sometimes bent human creatures to their will, so far as to get the aid of multitudes to experiment upon their schemes, there is something so subtle and at the same time so strong in capital that it always eludes their grasp, and unless it be locked absolutely up or destroyed, finds its way to the place where it will get free action. Co-operative manufacturing societies were one method of giving the working men the benefit of capital without its possession. These were received with almost unanimous welcome — all classes bade them God-speed, though the experienced doubted mightily the possibility of their success. There was something, however, so innocent, so pleasant and hopeful-looking, about such schemes, when compared with the tyranny and cruelty of the trades-union, that even those who doubted most would have been glad to admit that their apprehensions had been groundless.

The public heard much of the success of these schemes at first. There is generally, from the enthusiasm of the projectors, some chance of success in any large new scheme. But as anything tending to affect the position of the great body of work people, the co-operative system has dropped into oblivion. It may be

noticed, by the way, that this has been sometimes confounded with a different realisation of co-operation which has been more successful—the co-operative store. The co-operative manufactory and the co-operative store are radically distinct. The one is an institution to manufacture goods and sell to all the world, and it is hard to see how it is to be accomplished by a hundred men with less capital than it can be accomplished with by one. The co-operative store is a clubbing together of people to buy their necessities, and it may be their luxuries of life, at the wholesale price, in the belief that by the saving thus effected they will be able to pay for the expense of management, and at the same time be served at a price below that of the retail dealer. It is understood that many of these stores have been successful, and our impression is that their success has come from their teaching people with small incomes to pay for their goods in ready money, instead of obtaining and paying for credit.

But the idea of getting for the workman a larger allowance out of the capital of the employer than the laws of trade assign to him, has soared into far higher flights than these. It is said that there should be some working men in Parliament to represent the interests of their class, and endeavour in the face of Parliament and the world to get justice for it. Such a feature would be anomalous, since there are now no "interests" represented in Parliament. No doubt members of Parliament are, like other people, prejudiced, and perhaps their prejudices may sometimes be fostered by self-interest. But there are now no avowed interests represented there as there used to be when men boldly stood up for the monied interest, the shipping interest, and the West India interest. There

were unproductive. However it be, in very gifted men there has been a propensity for the mixture with the higher nature achieved by them of some sordid original lot, which is sometimes more imaginary than real. Burns and his friends were affectingly loud about his ploughmanship. He had a good plain education, and though he had been unfortunate in the prosaic department of life, as his immediate relations were, yet his family was of that class hovering on the border of gentility, from which Scotland has supplied the best of her many valuable men for the work of everyday life. It was the stock, for instance, that produced Sir Alexander Burnes, the great oriental diplomatist—in fact, he was a great-grandson of the poet's uncle. Hugh Miller, who came of much the same class, had a curious sensitiveness about working-manism. After he found that literature paid him better than his mechanical trade, he insisted on continuing to wear his leather apron, until a friend told him he was an impostor and a puppy. Both the imputations were rather startling to honest Hugh, but it was difficult to answer the reason for them. "You go about pretending to be a member of an established and respectable trade—that of stone-quarrier—while in reality you are nothing better than one of the vagabond crew who make their living by the press."

It is in vain by any rhetoric or philosophy to lift the successful pursuit of some common mechanical operation to the rank acquired by the great intellectual pursuits. "Not all that priest, sage, poet ever said" will put a first-rate joiner or boot-closer, with no other claim, in the same place in the world's respect or esteem with the statesman endowed with the capacity to sway a great nation, or even with the poet who has become its favourite minstrel, or the

painter of its greatest pictures. But how many are they who reach these eminences? Alas! do we not see how thickly the world is strewn with the hopeless efforts of those who have failed to climb the steep ascent to the temple of fame? Let the workman who loves his work, and completes his job to the satisfaction of himself and of the little world he belongs to, take comfort here, like Longfellow's blacksmith:—

"Tolling, rejoicing, sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begun,
Each evening sees its close;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose."

Something we remember in a casual dialogue fits in here. A philosopher of the school that grasps at the infinite was laying down the law that merit lies in endeavour, not in successful exertion—the great endeavour is a great act, whether successful or not; whereon a cynical friend put in, "I would sooner be the maker of a first-rate pair of shoes than the writer of one epic that has dropped into oblivion, or the painter of several yards of canvas about which the critic says, 'Yes, ambitious effort at a great historical picture. Some tolerable grouping and touches of colouring, but, on the whole, a failure;'" and between the two, our sympathy leans to the cynic. What a world, of good would come of it if the workman's pride were to settle more in his work and less on the feverish and mischievous pursuits he is so sadly addicted to in the present day. If he could rid himself of his self-imposed shackles, the high rewards for a high standard of work in the present condition of trade would, in comparison with the more unskilled labourer, enable him to hold a position in what is termed the middle-class. David Hume, who was not given either to sermonizing or to quoting

Scripture, wrote a sermon on "the middle station of life," proving that it was the happiest of all, and choosing for his text a great prayer, "Two things have I required of Thee; deny me them not before I die; remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be full and deny Thee, and say who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain." There is a brief expressive picture of the self-respecting workman drawn by Ebenezer Elliot, who was himself a mechanic, an employer of mechanics, and an author. It might be often, but we fear is too seldom realised:—

"You seek the house of taste, and find
The proud mechanic there;
Rich as a king, and less a slave,
Throned in his elbow chair,
Or on his sofa reading Locke,
Beside his open door;
Why start? why envy work like his,
The carpet on his floor."

And here where the wife speaks to the daughter:—

"And bring the new white curtain out,
And string the pink tape on;
Mechanics should be neat and clean,
And I'll take heed for John.
And brush the little table, child,
And fetch the ancient books
John loves to read, and when he reads,
How like a king he looks."

If any zealous, active unionist committee man should have patience to read a portion of this, he would no doubt denounce it as twaddle of a very inane kind; and we would join in that opinion, if we addressed it to him with the hope that it would have any influence on his intentions. It would come under the lash of Canning's irony, when

"The consul quoted Rynkershoek,
And Puffendorf, and Grotius;
And proved from Vattel
Exceedingly well,

Such a deed would be quite atrocious;
But the Turks they did
As they were bid,
And strangled him while he prated."

We have now done two parts of our task. We have endeavoured to show the course that should be pursued by working men, for the benefit of the community, and the ultimate benefit of their own class. We have uttered the opinion that on them such reasoning is entirely wasted. We have now a few words to say on the means by which public opinion, supporting the enforcement of legal remedies, may be able to check the mischievous operation of combinations and strikes. There is a recent addition to our statute-law, of which the unionists are fiercely demanding the repeal. Their motive is an urgent one, for the repeal of that law is a question of life or death to their organisations. For that same reason it is desirable that the public should be on their guard against the repeal, lest, by some of the accidents that happen in such cases, those who are excited by a strong motive to earnest exertion should prove successful, through the supineness of the public at large. With this preliminary explanation, we now ask attention to the measure itself.

It was represented that, when any little indiscretions on the part of Trades-unions came to light, their object was entirely misunderstood. The Trades-unions were in reality benefit societies, or were otherwise embarked in philanthropic and beneficent projects. But from some unfounded prejudices against them, they were not protected by law as other corporations directed to less worthy aims were. They could not invest their property, or enforce their lawful contracts, and they were at the mercy of defaulting officers, and of those who took the benefits supplied by them and evaded the performance of corresponding obligations. In 1871, an Act was

passed to put all this right.* It is called the Trades-Unions Act. With a candour unusual in the Statute-book, it sets forth at the entrance that "The purposes of any Trades-union shall not, by reason merely that they are in restraint of trade, be unlawful, so as to render void or voidable any agreement or trust." There are, however, certain conditions which, if they be among the specific objects of Trades-unions, the courts of law must not enforce, and among these the chief is thus set forth:—"Any agreement between members of a Trade-union as such, concerning the condition on which any members, for the time being, of such Trade-union, shall or shall not sell their goods, transact business, employ or be employed." If such an agreement is made, it is not to be enforced by the courts of law. Thus, while the "restraints on trade" are not to be in themselves illegal projects, the State is not to take in hand the enforcement of them. To render this absolutely precise, at the end of the list of the agreements not to be enforceable by law, there is a provision that "nothing in this section shall be deemed to constitute any of the above mentioned agreements unlawful."

Having thus given the Unionists the corporate privileges they desired, leaving the power of using them even for the detrimental but not unlawful purpose of restraint on trade, it was determined that, if possible, this purpose should no longer be effected by violence or menace—accordingly another measure called the "Criminal Law Amendment Act" was passed.†

The penalties of this Act are imprisonment, either with or without hard labour; and the offences that

incur the punishment, are violence to person or property, threatening and intimidating. There is a third class of offence more complicated. It consists in molestation or obstruction, with a view to coercion, when the coercion is for the purpose of compelling a person to do any of the following things.

"1. Being a master, to dismiss or to cease to employ any workman, or being a workman, to quit any employment, or to return work before it is finished.

"2. Being a master, not to offer, or being a workman, not to accept any employment or work.

"3. Being a master or workman, to belong, or not to belong, to any temporary or permanent association or combination.

"4. Being a master or workman, to pay any fine or penalty imposed by any temporary or permanent association or combination.

"5. Being a master, to alter the mode of carrying on his business, or the number or description of any persons employed by him."

It is next provided that a person shall be held to be molesting or obstructing another—

"1. If he persistently follow such person about from place to place.

"2. If he hide any tools, clothes, or other property, owned or used by such person, or deprive him of, or hinder him in the use thereof.

"3. If he watch or beset the house or other place where such person resides or works, or carries on business, or happens to be, or the approach to such house or place, or if with two or more other persons he follow such person in a disorderly manner in or through any street or road."

As the foundation of their de-

* 34 & 35 Vict. c. 31.

† 34 & 35 Vict. c. 32, "An Act to amend the Criminal Law relating to Violence, Threats, and Molestation"—29th June 1871. Master and Servants Act.

mands for the repeal of this Act, the Unionists do not profess to vindicate violence and intimidation. Their reason, indeed, has so much of the ridiculous in it as almost to hide its impudence.—It is an insult merely to suppose that they are guilty of such things; the imputation must be removed from the Statute-book! Why are *they* especially to be prohibited from offering their advice to an erring brother, and informing him of the danger he incurs by his perverse conduct? Why are they of all men to be prevented from running after an offensive object on the streets, and dealing to him the unpopularity he deserves? and so on. This Act no doubt differs from the old law, which waited until the mutilation or the murder was accomplished before stepping in with assistance. It is part of a system of legislation founded on the ancient precept, "*obsta principiis*"—stop at beginnings. Thus the known thief who has been punished for actual depredation is seized and punished if he be found prowling about back premises, and it is no justification of his possessing a hammer and chisel that he has a partiality for geological pursuits. Perhaps this is an ungracious example—let us take others. There are, say, two handsome establishments near Grosvenor Square or any other patrician centre. They are both occupied by very gentlemanly persons—men of ability, and acquainted with the world. Nobody knows exactly the source of the wealth evidently at their command, but that is nobody's business. Suddenly, however, the police find it to be theirs. In searching the one house they find a stock of thin tough paper such as that on which Bank of England notes are engraved. That is enough for itself; but if they also find plates of metal and engraving instruments, so much the clearer is

the case. The possession of these articles itself is a crime, in order that an inundation of forged notes may be stopped before it breaks forth—before even the notes are wholly or even partially in existence. It is in vain for the accused to plead that he is curious in paper tissues, and in methods of engraving—why should his innocent and ingenious pursuits be selected more than other people's for condemnation? In the other house there are found dies to impress her Majesty's likeness, with various chemicals and pieces of mixed metals brought to a resemblance to gold. It is in vain for the owner of these to plead that he is a philosopher in his scientific laboratory, trying if he can restore the lost art of the transmutation of metals. So both are transferred from their luxurious establishments to the convict prison.

Let us now see how far experience supports the plea that the persons against whom this legislation against rattening and threatening is levelled are peculiarly exempt from the imputation inferred in it. A few years ago the district of Sheffield appeared to have passed almost into the absolute authority of the Trades-unions. We are told by the Commissioners who reported on it, that when machinery or other property was missed in workshops, "recourse is seldom had to the police to recover property so taken away, but application is almost always made to the secretary of the union immediately upon the loss of tools, &c., being discovered." That the new government was a strong one appeared from execution after execution: the place was becoming a human shambles. The machinery of the criminal law was inefficient to detect and punish the murderers, as the executioners were called. Here, then, was urgent need of new legislation strengthening the hands of the executive and judicial powers.

A commission of inquiry into the general question of Trades-unions was invested with special powers by statute; and in connection with that inquiry Mr. Gathorne Hardy, then Secretary of State, authorised a special criminal investigation into the recent doings in Sheffield. The eminent gentlemen who conducted that investigation were baffled, like the regular administrators of the law. They found means, however, suddenly to open up the whole terrible mystery, and the consequent revelations astonished and appalled the public, until they were superseded by the grander tragedies of the Continental war. Before calling up for remembrance the method and substance of their revelation, a word of explanation as to what was previously known about the mysterious workings of the Unions may be appropriate.

No important opportunity for the divulging of such secrets had occurred since the trial of the Glasgow cotton-spinners in 1838. Fortunately, as we have seen, an account alike picturesque and distinct of that affair was given to the world by the gentleman who, as chief magistrate of the district, had to penetrate the mysteries. One of the most effective of the powers at work was a secret oath binding each member to obey the orders of a secret committee of fellow-workmen, whose names he did not know.

"The prevalence and terrors of these secret oaths constitute one of the greatest obstacles to the obtaining evidence in atrocious crimes connected with combination conspiracies. The persons engaged in the commission of the violence or crime, for the purposes of the Association, are almost always members of the Union, and have taken its oath; and if any of them are brought to give evidence in regard to the facts which fell under their observation, or the persons who employed them, the utmost difficulty is experienced in getting them to speak out; in consequence, not merely of the apprehen-

sions of bodily assault or violence, but of the strong sense which they entertain of the binding nature of this oath to the Combination. They generally conceive that the *first* oath is the one that must be observed; and consequently, that any subsequent perjury, how gross soever, is guiltless in a moral point of view, as it is only yielding obedience to the first oath of secrecy they have taken."

One of the chief uses made of this arrangement was, that when suspicion of a crime was brought home to any one ordered by the secret conclave to commit it, that body could order any number of others to appear at the trial and prove an *alibi* by swearing that they were in his company elsewhere at the same time. Here we carry back to the year 1838 the practices by which justice was defeated nearly thirty years later in Sheffield. But it happened also that the Glasgow trial brought to light the real nature of events which had at an earlier period baffled the executive, and had remained hidden for twelve years. One of the witnesses examined in 1838 had been a member "of the secret select assassinating committee" who had ordered a man named Graham to be put to death in 1825. As in the trial of 1838, other acts were proved, but the murder was not, and on this there is the commentary following:—

"In the annals of Criminal Jurisprudence, there are few more extraordinary combinations of circumstances than that which has thus brought, after so long a period, the real authors of this murderous assault on Graham to light. It is now proved by the concurring testimony of two witnesses—one of whom was the assassin hired to discharge the pistol, and the other a member of the secret select committee by whom the assassins were to be paid—that four men were hired by the committee of the association to shoot a *nob*, by way of striking terror into the rest; that the persons engaged in the murder were four

in number, and that they were to get £100 for it; that the money was accordingly paid from the funds of the Combination; that the expense of defending the assassins at their trial was borne by that body; that the wives of the transported assassins were maintained from its funds, and the one who was sentenced to Bridewell was sent, after his liberation, to America at their expense.

"When such powerful means of intimidation are at the command of, and scrupulously used by, the ruling Committees of Trades-unions, it will not appear surprising that the most unbounded terror should prevail among the workmen who find themselves exposed to the assaults or violence of these formidable conspiracies. This, accordingly, is one of the most remarkable features of the case, and the one which is most alarming both in a moral and a legal point of view. It was stated on oath by the Sheriff of Lanarkshire at the late Trial, that it was with the utmost difficulty that witnesses could be got to come forward to give evidence against the Combination; and that he was obliged to meet them in the night at different obscure places in order to take their depositions; and that as soon as these were delivered, the witnesses were, at their own request, put in jail to protect them from violence; in which five of them lay for five months, till the Trial came on. They required to be assured of protection by the Court, in the strongest and most solemn manner, before they could be brought to speak out; and the result has been, that they must all be sent into exile for life, as none of them could remain with safety in this country."

This system, strengthened and improved as it would seem by the intervening years of experience, shielded the murderers in Sheffield. When the whole came to light, there was a good deal of public censure on the method by which the revelation was accomplished. Whenever any witness had, to the satisfaction of the commissioners, made "a clean breast of it," he received a certificate exempting him from trial and punishment for the crimes he owned to. The results seem to have justified

this sacrifice of justice. It was soon found that the organisation in Sheffield was rather a monarchy than an oligarchy, and the grim monarch of the time was a man named Broadhead. It was necessary to inform him at his fifth examination, that unless he told everything that he knew both as to himself and others, he would not earn his certificate, and to warn him that if he concealed anything, it was at imminent risk both to the others and to himself, for he would deprive them of a chance of protection if anything could be proved against them otherwise, and it was impossible, if he spoke at all, to help making admissions that would tend to such a proof. Being evidently a man of business, he then went into the whole at once. When asked if he had anything to explain, he said "Yes—to begin with, the statement which I made to you yesterday relative to the Helliwell affair was untrue. I hired Dennis Clark." "To blow up Helliwell?" "Yes." He is asked, "Was not your object in talking to Crooks this morning to decide between yourselves how much you should confess and how much you should withhold?" "Yes." "What did you agree to withhold?" "We agreed to withhold the Hereford Street outrage." "Who committed it?" "Samuel Crooks." Then after a minute question or two, "Whenever you have any shooting business to do, has not Crooks been the man to whom you have always intrusted it?" "Yes." "How often have you employed him to shoot for you?" "Well—I do not know of any cases but those which have been named." "You do not know of any others?" "No." "It is impossible that you can make us believe that, if you employed this man to shoot Parker, and if Parker was shot, and you paid him money for shooting him, you cannot

but know who shot him ;" and this brings out that as there were three in the affair, it was not necessary that the employer should be told which of them pulled the trigger. Then, as a variety to the shooting, "Have you employed Crooks in anything else at any time to your knowledge?" "I think that he was once employed, but I am not certain. I really am not certain. My impression is, that he was once employed to blow up the boilers at Firth and Sons; but I cannot be certain. Somebody was. That is a good many years ago." This great man has had so many pieces of state business on his hands that he cannot recollect the particulars of them all. He is asked if he could recognise a letter as in his hand? He is not sure. He changes his hand occasionally. He is shown a letter to Messrs. Firth and Sons, saw-grinders: "Gentlemen, — The game works merrily, and we brush away all obstacles before us. If we appear to be rather long about it, you see we are none the less sure. It is your turn next, and the man that hangs back will be the first to get it; and if I but move a finger, you are sent into eternity as sure as fate. Be advised, and take the hint in time." "Do you think you wrote that letter?" "I think I did." Then, after a few discussions about details, comes a general question. "Is there any murder or any blowing up (not in your own Union only) of which you have knowledge, besides those which you have mentioned this morning?" "Within what period?" "Within ten years." "No." "Do you know anything about Tyzack's case?" "No." "Do you not know that Crooks shot at Tyzack?" "No, I know nothing whatever about it. Nothing." "Are you sure about

that?" "I am quite sure. Permit me the phrase—you are quite off the scent about that, so far as I am concerned." When afterwards pressed hard about cases of rattening—trifles beyond his recollection—he drops the remark, "What would be the use of my keeping back these trivial affairs, when there are these great affairs I have spoken of?" A remark by this man so stained in what the ordinary world calls crime, is curiously appropriate to what has been said about the spirit of united action and object deadening men to such things. He confessed to an effort to fix one of the outrages upon the employers, and said, "Yes; that was used to shield the wrong that I had done; and if you will permit me to make the observation, I took this view—wrongly, as I expressed yesterday, if you will—that there being no law for the trades, I conceived the notion that I had a right to take these courses in the absence of the law, and that the end would justify the means."

Another admission is still more significant, interpreting it along with the question, "As a man of experience, do not you believe that if rattening is obliged to be resorted to, and unlawful measures resorted to, the natural result is that from one error you go to another, and that other outrages are necessary in consequence?" "I am sorry to say that it has been the case with me."*

This is just the test of the value and utility of the new Act for suppressing the first stages in the shape of threat or annoyance. These things have hitherto been the beginning and initiatory cause of the formidable effects—the committing of maiming and murder, and the close binding together in common acts of offence, which gives the actors in the

* Minutes of Evidence, p. 235-254.

smaller matters the desire and the facility to screen those who go on to the greater. We know that this new law has already told on projects of coercion. They have been abandoned in favour of other influences, and among these one is bribery. In one case not very far from our own door, this was carried to a formidable extent, but then that case was called the head of the position, and those who defended it had to expect a severe attack. It was annoying, no doubt, but it did not make a general case for the suppression of bribery. Bribery on the one hand, assault or intimidation on the other—the two stand at opposite logical poles, when we consider that the person to be dealt with is an enemy. Giving your enemy a ten-pound note and giving him a broken head are two different things so logically inconsistent that not even an Irishman could count them as equivalents. There is this minor difference between them, that while the breaking of heads and other like correctives is apt to increase with exercise, the capacity for the distribution of ten-pound notes is apt to decrease, and in the end wear itself out. Under this law, in fact, the knobstick, or by whatever “dyslogistic term,” as Bentham used to say, he be called, will find his star in the

ascendant. To be bribed by high terms on the part of the employer is in itself a good thing; and if his enemies then outbid the employer, this will be a better thing. It was found, indeed, in the case alluded to, that some who were not very scrupulous made a trade of the affair, not much to the satisfaction of the Unionists. Then unless there be gross mismanagement by the public authorities, men will no longer be frightened away. Teeth are drawn and claws pared. When violence accumulated from hustlings and threats until it reached maiming or murder, then of course the public took the alarm, and the law went to work, but found so many difficulties that it seldom reached the offender. And if it did reach him on rare occasions, when he had achieved that ultimate grade in his course of crime, what consolation was there in that to the poor man, who saw from the beginning of troubles what was to be the end of them? It was such a prospect as this that frightened away the foreign engineers who attempted to settle in Newcastle. If the executive authorities of the State do their duty, and receive due public support, there will be an end to the minor persecutions which accumulate with impunity until the ultimate crime is perpetrated.

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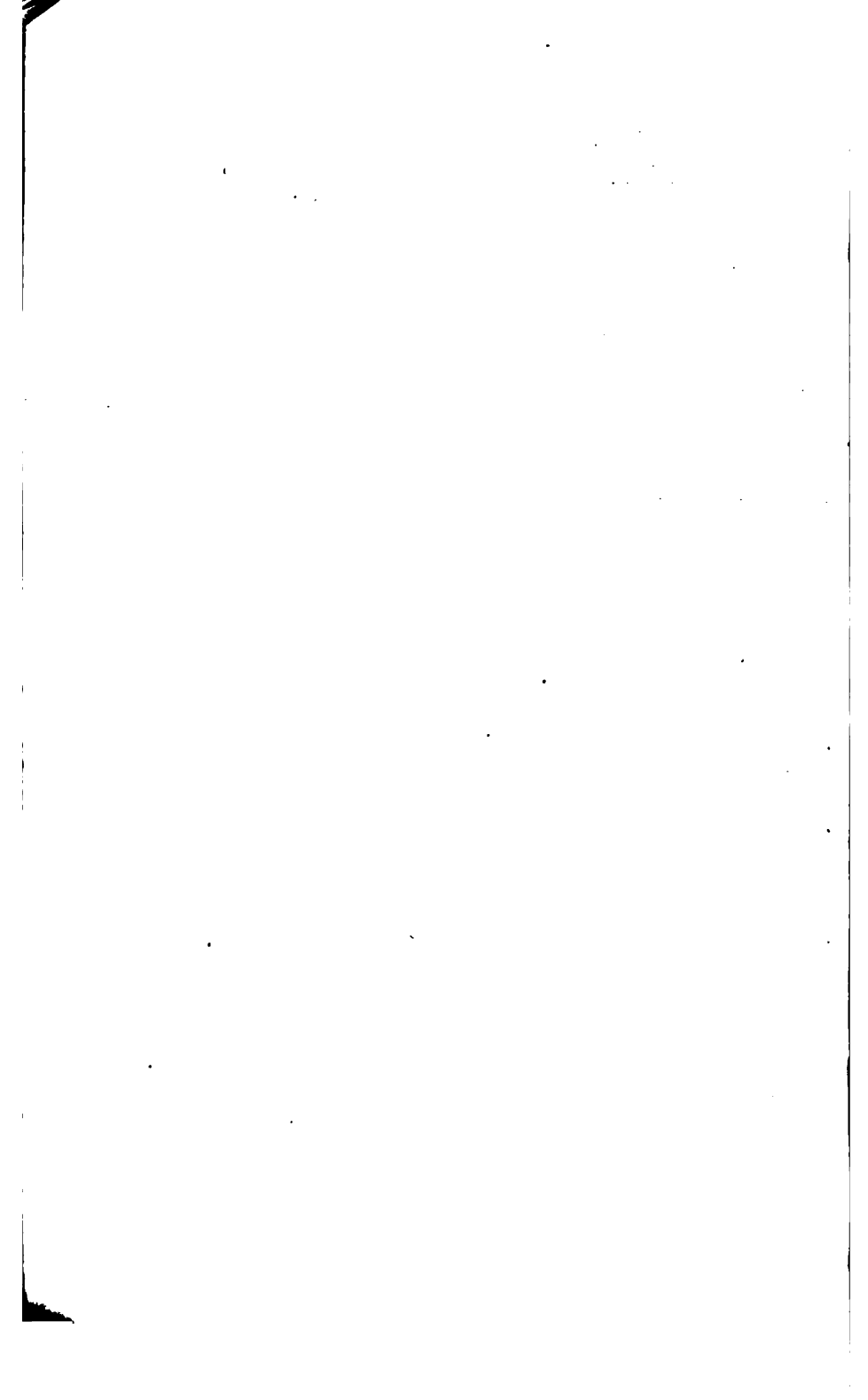
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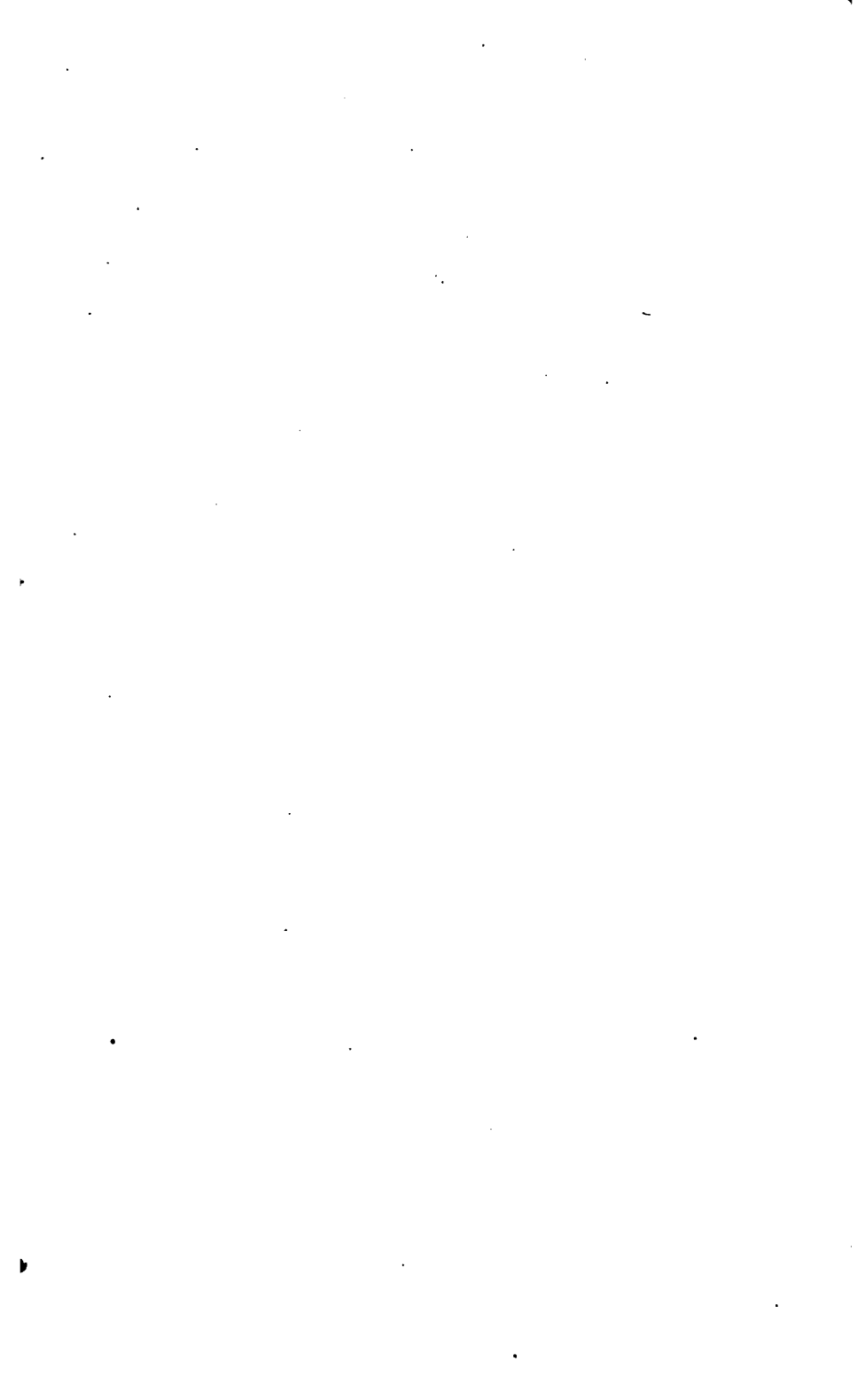
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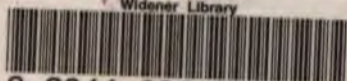
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